



# 환생은 관능/ 해가지고

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INTIME FUSION FANTASY STORY

intime

# **I Reincarnated For Nothing**

– 환생은 괜히 해가지고 –

**- Volume 5 -**

**-Author-  
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**[ NaughtyOtter (Wuxiaworld) ]**

# Chapter 104

## It isn't Going as Planned (1)

The Forest of Eternity greeted a morning that was a bit more chaotic than usual.

"I want you guys to match levels! You guys are still too weak!"

"However, we became Dark Elves, and we've become stronger. We no longer want to be treated as a resource or a slave by the humans. Even if we have to push ourselves, we have to get stronger quickly!"

"We are already pushing ourselves too far. You should think about your comrades, who'll mourn your death!"

"Koo-oohk..."

"There are large Dungeons. The hero ordered us to attempt it with a party of 20 members."

"Will you be eating breakfast before you go? Mycenae brought a lot of tasty food from the heart of the continent... there is enough to fill this square."

"How did Mycenae get so strong? Is this true for the other Dark Elves, who went out into the continent?"

"As expected, we acted too rashly. If there are ones that needed to be punished, it isn't the Dark Elves. It should have been us....."

He was used to Elves, who loved peace and silence. It felt foreign when he saw them insisting on power and strength in the morning. He had to sleep cuddled in Maetel's arms. In the early mornings, he escaped from her embrace, and he monitored the activities of the Elves.

"Hero, I'm already awake."

"Good morning... are you going too?"

Artpe had been monitoring the movement of the Elves, and the first one to approach him was the Dark Elf elder. She was the first one to accept his proposal.

Normally, the Elves moved through the forest wearing light equipments. The Elves were wearing leather armor that protected their vital organs, and they had a bow and quiver slung across their backs. They looked really cool.

“Elves that live the longest within the Forest of Eternity are named the elders. Basically, the elders are the strongest in terms of skills, spells and battle experience. We trained our skills for several hundred years, yet our skills were comparable to Mycenae, who is barely over 100 years old. It caused a good amount of shock amongst us...”

It seemed Mycenae had exceeded the century mark in terms of age. He unexpectedly learned Mycenae’s greatest secret. She was so sensitive about it that she never talked about it. In any case, he wasn’t interested in her since she was an ajumma.

Artpe nodded his head as if he hadn’t heard anything important.

“Mycenae had to fight tooth and nail in the outside world for survival. The time she had spent out there differed in quality to the time you guys spent here, so it can’t be helped. Still, you guys will make up for the difference starting now.”

“The elders will take turns in guarding the World Tree. The rest will head to the Dungeon. That is what we have decided.”

“It is good to evolve. Do your best.”

The Elves knew that they had made a mistake, so they were working hard to rectify it. They were much better than humans in doing this. It looked as if the deep-seated prejudice towards the Dark Elves were breaking down, and the solidarity between the Elves and the Dark Elves would become cemented.

“I’m guessing you will be leaving today.”

“You are quite perceptive.”

“If you weren’t leaving, we were thinking about leaving one of the Dungeons for the hero’s party. However, it seems you will be leaving all of the Dungeons in this region to us.”



“Ah, it isn’t like that. We are already at a point where the Dungeons in this region won’t raise our levels.”

If one went by outward appearance, this was a topic that an adult should take control. However, this very young human had already reached an unfathomable level. This truth once again made the elder surprised.

“This generation’s heroes... You guys are really really incredible. Moreover, there are two of you.”

“Oh, I hear you. Why do you think there are two of us?”

“It means that the Demon King’s power is that strong. God puts importance on balance.”

“Hmmp. I’ll kill both of them someday.”

He didn’t hesitate to reveal his ambition as he turned around. The elder burst out laughing as she called out after him.

“Oh, hero.”

“What?”

“Please take care of Mycenae.”

“No. I don’t want her. Take her back.”

At Artpe’s firm reply, a deeper smile somehow appeared on the elder’s face.

“We really did much harm to the past Dark Elves. Despite this fact, Mycenae didn’t hold any grudge against us. Instead, she always worried over the forest. She worked to help us. We’ve finally realized our mistake, and we want to find a way to compensate her. However... We don’t have much we can do for her.”

“I can’t do anything for her either. At the most, I can give her a discount.”

“She seems very satisfied with the life she has made for herself. If she continues to be with the hero, I believe wholeheartedly that she’ll be able to gain even more happiness with the hero.”

“Hmmpf.”

Artpe didn't reply to her anymore. He just waved her away. The elder let out a relaxed laughter as she took leave. When he read the meaning behind her smile, he thought about Mycenae's figure from yesterday. He became worried. He was reminded of the fact that Mycenae had tried to lay claim to Artpe since his childhood.

'Maetel excessively intervenes in my life. One is enough... Ooh ooh ooh.'

In his past life, women had caused a lot of headache for him. Somehow, it had gotten worse in his current life. He kept sighing as he walked towards the Elves below the World Tree. They were about to head towards the Dungeons.

“Hey, you guys.”

“Hero!”

“It's the hero!”

“He's young.”

“He's handsome.”

The Elves acted like five year olds as they kept repeating the word 'hero.' They gathered around him. It seemed they were fascinated by the fact that he was a hero. He let out a bitter laugh as he waved his hand.

“I want all those that are going to the Dungeons to come to me in order.”

“He's going to give us a Blessing!”

“Nope.”

He didn't place a Blessing over the Elves. He used Reinforcement. One round of permanent Reinforcement didn't consume much Mana. Their armor became lighter, and their weapons became much sturdier. It was enough to allow them to escape from situations that would have killed them.

“My body feels lighter!”

“It feels as if my bow gained more elasticity. The hero’s power is amazing!”

“Elder! You should come receive his Blessing!”

Elves, Dark Elves and even the elders benefited from Artpe’s Reinforcement skill. When they checked their gears, they all had a happy expression on their faces. He quickly sent away those that received the Reinforcement. He moved onto the equipments of the next batch of Elves.

“The World Tree is happy.”

“Just saying thank you will be enough.”

However, the Elves were telling him the truth. Artpe had already used Reinforcement on the equipment of the Elves that numbered in the tens of thousands. Suddenly, the World Tree shook slightly, and a branch broke off from the World Tree. It fell to the ground.

“Ooh-huhk. We’ll die if we get hit by that!”

“It’s an incredible large branch!”

The branch fell right in front of Artpe. It had hit the ground after falling for several hundred meters, yet it didn’t break. It was a testament to how strong the branch was.

“Oh, it’s the World Tree!”

“Oh oh oh. The World Tree has given such a large present to the hero!”

“I think the wind broke that... ah-yaht.”

At some point, Mycenae had approached Artpe from the back. She smacked him on the back of his head.

“This is a gift of appreciation given to you by the World Tree. Even the Elves rarely get this present, so you should accept it with thanks.”

“You are like a fanatic.....”

The broken branch from the World Tree was fairly thick, and there were a lot of

branchlets attached to it. On top of that, there were a great number of healthy leaves at the end of the branch.

Despite this fact, Artpe calmly picked up the branch, and he put it away into his Dimensional Pouch. Regina, who had been watching this sight, saw a small branch fall towards her.

“The World Tree is giving away much today.”

“It is to be expected, She personally stopped the humans...”

“M... me! I want one too!”

“I want a branch from the World Tree-nim!”

“All right. Let’s immediately rush the Dungeons! Let us gain power that will allow us to protect the World Tree!”

“Let’s do that!”

It might be the result of half the race becoming Dark Elves, but it seemed assertiveness was somehow becoming normalized amongst them. Artpe decided to think of it as a good sign.

However, there was a Dark Elf that continued to stare at Artpe as she stood next to him. It was none other than the ‘high rank’ Merchant Mycenae.

“Artpe-nim~ Are you going to sell that branch to me?”

“I’m not selling even a single leaf to you.”

“You are too much!”

“If you think that is so unfair, you should do something that’ll make the World Tree give you a branch in thanks.”

“You are too much!”

“Ah, Artpe! What are you doing over there!”



“Oppa!”

The Elves were bustling about early in the morning, so of course, Maetel and Sienna woke up from their sound sleep.

Since all his party members were awake, he retrieved Regina, who was absentmindedly staring up at the World Tree. The branch was in her hands. He decided to leave the Forest of Eternity. Even if he stayed longer inside the forest, there was nothing more to be gained here.

“Please contact me a bit more in the future. If not, how will you be able to purchase skills and spell books at the right time?”

“Yes, yes. Ah. You friends are calling for you over there.”

“Ah-ooh. Really! They really are bad at reading the situation!”

Once again, Mycenae looked as if she wanted to leave with Artpe’s party. However, she had friends, who had longed to see her over the long years. Then there were the Elves, who were attempting the Dungeons for the first time. It seemed she was going to stay in the forest for the near future to support the Elves.

“You look happy, ajumma. I want you to live well here!”

“If that little brat wasn’t one of my exclusive customers, I would have...!”

Maetel’s expression indicated that she would be happy if Mycenae stayed in the Forest of Eternity for her whole life. Maetel waved her hand as she took Artpe’s hand into hers. Artpe’s other unoccupied hand was taken up by Sienna, and Sienna’s other hand was carefully taken up by Regina.

The hero’s party had grown to four members, and they looked like children leaving for a picnic. They left the Forest of Eternity.

“This place is really big. I can see how a different race could live within it.”

They were on the road back to Tiata. No matter how much they walked, the World Tree remained in their sight, so Maetel spoke those words. Sienna also felt the same way as she added her own opinion.

“It feels as if we can find heaven if we climb to the top of that tree.”

“I don’t know. Before you can climb to the top of the World Tree, you’ll be attacked by the Elves. I guess it’ll be possible to send them all to heaven.”

“Oppa, you are too much!”

Artpe crushed the hopes and dreams of the girls with cruel reality. When he turned his gaze away, he caught sight of Regina, who was walking alongside them. She still had a absentminded expression on her face.

“What did you do with your branch of the World Tree?”

“I changed it into a bracelet.”

It was as she said. There was a bracelet, which he had never seen before, around her slender wrist.

The brown fibers of the branch were intertwined, and the abundant leaves were covering the bracelet.

It was full of life energy. It was an Artifact capable of amplifying one’s potential and latent power by its mere presence.

Artpe’s branch was much larger than her branch, but his branch amplified magical energy rather than life energy. It seemed the World Tree’s gifts were tailored to the individual.

Maybe, if he used the Artifact on Regina... No, he was making a rash judgement. Artpe shook his head to dislodge the idea that had took root in his mind.

“If all the Elves were equipped with such Artifacts, the humans wouldn’t have dared to mess with the forest. How foolish.”

“We received special treatment. So proud.”

Artpe ignored Regina, who had on a slightly prideful expression. At that moment, Maetel was able to pry her eyes away from the World Tree. She asked him a question.

“Artpe, where are we headed?”

“First, I want to monitor the situation within Tiata, Aedia and Daitan. I have to be sure to intimidate them, so they won’t bother the Forest of Eternity. Then...”

Their identity as heroes were already exposed. They had to spread this knowledge to all the humans, so they can slow down the rampant actions of the Demon King’s army. The information that the heroes were born in Diaz had been spread throughout the continent. However, there was a different level of awareness when the hero talked about the threat.

“Of course, the humans won’t mobilize easily as the Elves. Still, I have to prepare them. It means my conscience will be clear even if the humans gets steamrolled by the Demon King’s army.”

“Your personality is the worst. You are a rare piece of trash.”

“I like that part about him. It seems Regina is still in the dark about this fact.”

“I feel bad for Sienna.....”

Artpe decided to ignore Sienna too.

“So what’s next, Artpe? Are we going to go find the male party member you talked about before?”

“Nope. Since Regina joined our party, we don’t have to try so hard to find the other members.”

“Shoulder shrug.”

She was being annoying. He ignored Regina, who became full of herself. Artpe spoke the most hero-like words he could think up.

“We are going to acquire all the treasure of this world.”

# Chapter 105

## It isn't Going as Planned (2)

They were on the road back from the Forest of Eternity, and they were headed towards Tiata... Their walk refreshed their mood, but they soon got sick of walking. Regina was capable of Flight magic, and Artpe was able to use Float magic. Artpe carried Sienna and Maetel in each arm. It took them only an hour to exit the forest.

“Flying is fun!”

“Actually, I was thinking about acquire a flying pet.”

[Nyaa?? Nyaa nyaa?]

“No, this is fine. I like it the way it is!”

Roa was nervous about a competitor showing up. Maetel liked being in Artpe’s arms while they were flying. When he saw their reaction, he firmly shook his head.

“No, this is already a settled matter.”

“You are too much!”

[Nyaaaaaaaaaaaah!]

The hero’s party did stunts in the air as they flew over Tiata. When they looked down from the sky, it looked as if Tiata was maintaining their peace. At the very least, it looked like that on the surface. He had worried Tiata would resist against the combined forces of Daitan and Aedia. Fortunately, the king of Daitain had handled the situation in an appropriate manner.

“The king of Daitan... Ah. It seems he is in Aedia. I guess it is understandable. It is more important to stabilize Aedia right now.”

“So how are you going to raise awareness in regards to the threat posed by the Demon king’s army?”

“I’m going to receive help from Aedia’s magicians and the Dungeon merchants affiliated with merchant companies. I’m sure the king of Daitan will welcome this. It is the same concept as the king of Daitan invading Aedia to divert the attention of his populace. He’ll want to direct the confusion and anger felt by the people of Aedia and Tiata elsewhere. That is why he’ll most likely promote my actions extensively.”

“Artpe, how many threads of thoughts do you have going on at one time?”

Maetel’s eyes were excessively bright. That was why Artpe decided to cancel his ‘Chatter Away while Bluffing’ skill.

Soon, they returned to see the striking sight of the destruction caused to the palace of Tiata. The corridors were destroyed in its entirety. They arrived at the Warp Gate where the magicians and knights from Aedia and Daitan were performing a strict watch.

“Huht! Hero!”

“What happened to Elves within the forest... Huhk! She’s the magician from last time!”

“My name is Regina”

“No, it’s alright. You don’t have to introduce yourself.”

Artpe once again warned them about the Forest of Eternity. Then he injected his Mana into the Gate to activate it. They passed through it, and of course, magicians and knights were also on guard on the other side.

“Huht! Hero!!”

“What happened to Elves within the forest... Huhk! She’s the magician from last time!”

“My name is Regin...”

“Did you guys practice these lines from some script?”

The king of Daitan wasn’t at the palace. When Artpe asked a knight about it, he was told that the king had taken the initiative by leading the knights and magicians outside to clean the capital, which was covered in filth. Artpe thought for a brief moment, then he nodded his head. He turned to look at Sienna and Regina.

“I think I’ll have to stay here for couple days with Maetel. Everything will go more smoothly if the heroes steps forward.”

“What about Regina and me?”

“I want you guys to go and empty all the Dungeons in Aedia. I want you to raise Regina’s level, so I’ll plot out a course that will be very hard.”

“.....”

Artpe took out a map of Aedia, and he started marking the location of the Dungeons and the ruins. When they saw this, the eyes of Sienna and Regina turned white. As if she was very unsatisfied with what he was proposing, Regina kept hitting Artpe’s midsection. However, Artpe was tempered by Maetel’s body tackles, so her attacks didn’t even itch.

“It’s done. I want you to give all the Unique spell that comes out from these place to Regina. I want her to learn it all.”

“Why me?”

“There are Unique skills that can only be used by heroes. Of course, that doesn’t mean I won’t learn other spells. However, if I monopolize all the spells, your power will become relatively weak.

“I’m plenty strong.”

“If we go to the Demon world, there are plenty Demons that will be as strong as you. If you are satisfied with your current power, you’ll suffer in the future.”

Of course, there weren’t that many that were on Regina’s level. She was in the top 10 percent. However, the top 10% of the Demons meant that there were over tens of thousands of them.

“Maetel and I fall within the top five percent. Of course, our abilities are basically a cheat, so we can content with the top three percent. However, that still means at least 10 thousand Demons are stronger than us. There is only one thing that we are better at than them. It is our growth speed. We have to utilize this fact to the fullest.”

“You are a cheat.”



“You are unnecessarily handsome.”

Artpe once again flicked Regina and Sienna’s forehead. As an afterthought, he handed over the map with the Dungeons marked.

“I want you to come back in one month. I want Sienna to target an increase of 10 levels. Regina should target 20 levels. ”

“Our levels will rise that fast?”

At that point, Artpe took a peek at Maetel. When he saw Maetel slightly nod her head, Artpe let out a bright smile as he gave an affirmation.

“Yes, you will grow fast.”

“.....I sensed some kind of emotional exchange. I demand an explanation.”

“So let’s meet after a month.”

“I demand an explanation.”

Artpe took out Pipi, and he handed it over to Regina.

“I’m letting you borrow it. Normally, the Demite only follows its contractor. However, you are also a Demite, so I think there is enough familiarity between the two of you.”

“.....thank you.”

She received Pipi. She hugged it as she gently stroked it. It was as if the Demite wasn’t an Artifact that helped one’s use of magic. She looked as if she was handling a pet or a doll.

He didn’t mind it, so he turned away. He had smoothly changed the subject, so he had achieved his goal.

“Wow. There’s five Dungeons and a ruin. Let’s hurry up and go, Regina.”

“Pipi made me stronger. Fast flight.”

This was how Regina and Sienna left. When Maetel was left alone with him, she was

about to die from happiness. She tried to link arms with him, but Artpe let out a heavy sigh.

“We’ll have to go out into the streets to clean it up.”

“Artpe is the one that made the mess.”

“Humans are beings that always act first and regret later. I knew that this burden would fall on my shoulders later on, but I couldn’t help it. I did it to feel that momentary sensation of pleasure. Hue hue. This will be hard...”

“When you resign yourself to your fate, there is a slight taste of hopelessness that comes off you. I really like it.”

“I’m starting to get scared when you give a detailed account of what you enjoy.”

Artpe and Maetel immediately started cleaning up the capital. Maetel couldn’t use magic, so she used Record Divide to share her Mana with Artpe. It was enough to accelerate his progress in doing this job.

“Huht! That guy is...!”

“He’s the magician that dirtied the capital!”

“I heard a rumor that he is a hero.....”

“Hero? That makes no sense! No way!”

Artpe had already given up on cleaning up his image! He had given up on the idea of cooperating with the humans to fight the Demon King. He had done so when he escaped Diaz’s evil influence. In terms of other nations, he just wanted them to strengthen their defense against the Demon King’s army.

“Clean! Clean! Cl---ean!”

“Amazing. The smell is gone! I don’t even smell any dust or fungus!”

“I’m sorry, but you don’t have have to make such a detailed commentary. Clean!”

Artpe’s Clean spell was on a different level compared to the other magician in terms

of range and efficacy. Hundred magicians had sweated as they cleaned for an hour. They were only able clean one street. A single round of spells from Artpe had completely cleaned an entire block.

“Aht! Magici... Hero! You are back!”

“Let’s talk later! Clean!”

“.....is he really a hero? Or is he a janitor?”

Artpe walked past the sweating party led by the king. He used his Clean spell at random. When he walked past through a street, not a speck of dust was left behind! In the beginning, the civilians had resented Artpe as they worked hard to clean their city. Now they just wanted Artpe to come to their homes as soon as possible.

It didn’t matter if it was the shopping district, personal homes or government buildings. He cleaned them all in a fair manner. He didn’t eat or sleep for four days as he cleaned everything. Suddenly, he realized he had restored the capital to a pristine state.

“The capital is clean again!”

“He even fixed the sewer system. What an incredible ability.....”

“It really is an incredible ability. It almost makes me accept the fact that he is a hero...”

How could humans be so simple! They knew Artpe had made this mess, yet they were cheering for him. The number of people cheering for Artpe was growing rapidly after they saw the clean city!

“As expected, humans are simple. If I do a little bit more here, they’ll sing my praises.”

“They really are idiots!”

“.....”

Artpe stared at Maetel. She tilted her head in puzzlement, and she asked him a question with a bright expression on her face.

“What is it, Artpe? Is there something on my face?”

“No, it’s nothing...”

Artpe took his idiot towards the kingdom as fast as possible. The king of Daitan had already changed his clothes, and he had been waiting for Artpe.

“Thank you, hero. I never expected you to help in the cleanup.”

“We just want to move this along as fast as possible. Let’s get into the main topic.”

The knights of Daitan and the magicians of Daitan were lined up along the sides. They were on standby. It seemed the king of Daitan had been successful in securing the magicians of Aedia. Half of their resentment was headed towards Artpe, and the other half was directed towards the king of Daitan. Still, the king of Daitan was pretty skilled in finessing the situation.

“Are you plannig on establishing your empire?”

“I still want to keep the two kingdoms... Since there are three kingdoms including Tiata, I need to repair each kingdom. I was thinking about pushing the establishment of the empire to a later date...”

“Don’t do that... You have to bind the unsettled hearts of the people into one. You probably already know how to do this.”

In his past life, the Demon king’s army had invaded the human realm in earnest when the hero was over 20 years old. Several plans had been percolating underneath the surface, and they all bubbled up to the surface at the same time. The hero had been disillusioned by humanity, but she methodically blew up these plans with the help of her party members.

Of course, the current heroes were only 15 years old. However, the heroes weren’t the only ones that had changed from their previous life. It was the same for the Demon king’s army. There was a group of Demons that moved independently from the Demon king’s army. They didn’t follow the Demon King’s orders. He knew more changes would continue to occur in the future.

“Will you allow me to sell the name of the hero?”

“From the moment I searched you out, that was my aim. Basically, I thought you would be aligned the most with me amongst the three nations.”

“I’m starting to see what you are trying to do, hero.”

“It took you long enough.”

They exchanged evil smiles with each other. It was a crime if one used someone else without their knowledge. However, if both sides agreed to it, it was a deal being made. The phrase, ‘If you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours.’, was quite apt.

“What do we have to do?”

“You’ll have to declare the establishment of your empire. Then we’ll borrow the power of the magicians of Aedia and the merchant organizations. We’ll unite Daitan, Aedia and Tiata. Then we’ll create a Mana Transmission route between them. When you announce the formation of your empire, you’ll notify everyone of the existence of the heroes, You’ll explain the implications of the Demon King’s army showing up. Ah. I want everyone to see us, so it is imperative that we’ll be able to transmit images. What do you think? Easy, right?”

“Easy, my ass!”

One of the magicians let out a shout of dismay, but his voice didn’t reach anyone. The king of Daitan... no, the man that would become an emperor of an empire was firmly shaking hands with Artpe. The contract was satisfactorily concluded.

It took them two weeks to expand Aedia’s Mana Transmission route to Daitan and Tiata. Immediately, Angelo Zard was crowned first emperor of the Zard empire. When he constructed the united empire, their most important mission was revealed.

“The king of Aedia and the duke of Tiata was in league to destroy the peace of the human realm. They had been creating an evil magic! I had been playing in the palm of their hands unknowingly, but two people helped me break apart this conspiracy. These two people are none other than the heroes. ”

The existence of the heroes was made public to the three nations... no, the empire of Zard... no, it was announced to the entire continent.

“That’s right. Oh, my people! We don’t have time to hate each other! The Demon King has appeared! The fight between humans are over. Our enemy... is the Demon race!”

It was the moment when the human realm were made aware of the existence of the

Demon King's army.



# Chapter 106

## It isn't Going as Planned (3)

“Heroes.”

“They really are heroes. The heroes that were born in Diaz are in Aedia... No, they are in the empire of Zard.”

“If the heroes are going along with this, I might be able to accept this situation.”

“A nation that was born alongside the heroes... The fall of Aedia does make my heart burn, but it feels as if I’m watching a lotus flower bloom from within the mud. Of course, I can’t help, but celebrate its birth...”

It didn’t matter if one knew about it or one didn’t know about it. Everyone accepted the reality of the situation when confronted with the title of hero and Demon king. Heroes were the only existence that could transmute a human vs human struggle into a struggle between humanity and the Demon race.

Of course, the ruling class of each nation would have tried to somehow profit from the situation, but the entire ruling class of Aedia and Tiata was gone right now.

Artpe was cooperating with the ex-king of Daitan. The current emperor Angelo Zard had a good grasp of the situation, so there were many magicians and knights on his side. He used them to establish the Zard empire, and the proclamation of the heroes were able to be spread throughout the united empire of Zard.

“Hoo. I’ve somewhat set the stage.”

“Is this what Artpe wanted?”

“This might not sound so great, but a war had broken out at the right time. I was able use this to my advantage.”

In a situation where it was potentially unstable and dangerous, it was hard to perceive and fix the problems as they appeared.

The people had received a huge shock, but until the dangers rose to the surface, most of them would maintain the mentality of ‘We’ve been fine until now, so it’ll be fine in the future.’ and ‘It worries me, but there are other more important things to focus on.’ These kinds of attitudes were problematic, but he decided to worry about this problem at a later date.

“The war made everything obvious. It revealed the plans of Aedia and Tiata. It exposed the problems being shouldered by the Elves within the Forest of Eternity.”

“Yes, it is a situation where everything is exposed. It makes it easier to cut out and heal the malignancy. I acknowledge that there were inevitable sacrifices...”

“Hoo-hue hee. Artpe is really kind.”

“I’m not kind. Hey. Don’t pet me like that.”

At that moment, his ears picked up murmured voices...

“The two heroes are really friendly with each other.”

“They are a man and a woman in their prime. They spent many years together. It would be weird if there wasn’t any affection between them...”

How could they be so predictable!

There were too many people that were saying words that were straight out of the ‘Words That Shouldn’t Be Spoken Unless You Want to Become a Supporting Character in Another Person’s Life Volume 1.’

“There! Look at what they are saying.”

“Hue hue. If we display our relationship like this, no other bitc... women will dare to get between us.”

“Hey. What word were you about to use right now?”

They were participating in a weird parade. It was a parade celebrating the ascension of Angelo Zard to the position of emperor. On top of that, they were advertising the presence of the heroes. It was a parade that displayed the alliance between the heroes and Zard in no uncertain terms.

“Please grab my hand once, hero-nim!”

“Hero-nim!”

Of course, voices of support from the people could be heard intermittently. However, he completely ignored them. If he developed an image of being too friendly with the civilians, they would want his help over every trivial problem!

When the opportunity to kill the Demon King arrives, he didn't want some messed up quest involving Flower Selling Girl A to pop up. It would make him go all over the place for nothing. Artpe wanted to stop the possibility of such routes from developing.

“Ooh-oong. You were being kind hearted, but you suddenly became bad.”

“I've always been bad.”

“Still, it is better than Artpe holding the hand of another woman, so I'll forgive you.”

“.....you do realize that you are not much better than me recently?”

Where did he go wrong in nurturing the hero? Artpe mulled over this question during the parade, but he couldn't come up with an answer.

The extremely close relationship between the two heroes was seen by the civilians watching the parade. Moreover, the recorded images were spread throughout the empire, and everyone became aware of this fact.

A week passed before the celebration finally came to an end. Emperor Angelo Zard elevated the capital of Aedia to become the capital of his empire. In turn, this meant he needed a more intimate connection with the lands of Daitan. He needed a Warp Gate like the one linking Aedia and Tiata. He started constructing one that connected Daitan to Aedia.

He was already able to communicate with the entirety of his empire thanks to the Magic Transmission magic. When the Warp Gate was finished, he would be able to easily rule over his empire.

“Thank you for acting on my behalf, hero. It must have been tiring.”

“This was part of the deal. You are the one with the tough task ahead of you, emperor.”

When the hero called Angelo by his title of emperor, a small smile appeared on his face.

“I was able to rise to this position thanks entirely to you, hero. That is why I’ll protect this empire. I’ll prove to you that I deserve to be in this seat...”

“You know that the Demon King’s army is on the move, yet you have such ambitions. I kinda like that.”

Artpe nodded his head in a satisfied manner as he took out a map. As if she knew the identity of this map, Maetel’s eyes slightly narrowed. Angelo Zard tilted his head in puzzlement as he received it... His reaction was the same as those that received similar maps from Artpe.

“Is the information within this map true!?”

“I’ve marked Daitan, Aedia and Tiata. I categorized them into regions that will be good to grow your soldiers, knights and magicians. You should be thankful.”

This was obvious, but the map was marked with the location of the Dungeons. The high level Dungeons were left out, and he had only marked the Dungeons that the humans could handle. This was enough to surprise Angelo Zard.

“You went this far for me.....”

“This will allow you to grow the power of your empire. Moreover, it will allow you to gain the loyalty of your subjects. It sounds possible, right?”

“It is more than adequate! Even if this map is half... no, even if this map is 90% wrong, the remaining 10% would greatly increase the strength of the empire!”

“I’m glad you know the worth of what I’m giving you.”

Artpe’s eyes narrowed.

“Don’t release this information all at once. The people will become entitled. They’ll take the information as a given, and they’ll become lazy. They’ll want more from you. I’m sure you know what I am talking about.”

“I will take your words to heart..... is that why the levels, Dungeons and quantity of

the loots were categorized like this? I'm not sure how you know all of this, but... No, I won't pry into it."

Angelo Zard took the map, and he put it deep within his robe.

"I'll put my trust in you. I will carry this out."

"Good. That's the answer I wanted."

The hero from his previous life had grown the power of her party through Dungeon exploration.

She had ignored the stress that her actions had caused on her relationship with each nation on the continent. She focused on the concept that everything would be fine once the Demon king was defeated. That was why she hadn't been able to create a friendly relationship with other nations. Everything broke apart before any amicable relationship could be started. It forced her into a much more brutal fight.

However, things were different now. He had successfully created a positive relationship with the Elves within the Forest of Eternity and the humans on this continent. It was possible for Artpe to grow their strengths, and they would remain vigilant against the Demon king's army. The process had been a complete mess, but he had achieved the best possible result.

'Diaz is akin to the weakest amongst the Four Heavenly Kings. I don't have to do anything in regards to them. On the other hand, the holy nation of Paladia... They already found a candidate that is more suitable for their needs.'

He arrived at the conclusion that he should make a clean sweep of the riches of this world. He just had to wait for Sienna and Regina to come back. Then they could depart! They could have fun clearing the Dungeons of this world!

"Your highness, an envoy from the temple has arrived."

"Bring him in."

.....there was a time when Artpe had such thoughts.

"I congratulate you on your ascension, your majesty. The temple does not involve itself in the feuds between royalty. That is why we could only sit by and watch the war. I

apologize.”

“No, you don’t have to worry about it.”

The envoy dispatched by the temple wore the hat of an archbishop. He was the archbishop in charge of all the temples within Aedia! This was obvious, but in terms of power within the temples, he was highly placed. He was in the top seven.

The God Flush had covered everything. It was called the Upthrust Calamity.(The event had already gained a name.) The temple suffered under the same predicament, but the temple was clean now. Maybe, he was imagining things, but it felt as if the archbishop was glaring at Artpe. This was why Artpe decided to ignore him.

“However, you did reveal the names of the heroes in the parade and the coronation ceremony. It was something that wasn’t sanctioned by the temple. The pope in Paladia is deeply worried about this.”

“Hmm. About what?”

At the emperor’s reply, the archbishop was able to raise his head. The archbishop was clearly glaring at Artpe. He hadn’t been imagining it! Of course, he became terrified by Maetel’s fierce gaze, so the archbishop immediately turned his head away!

“The Hero’s Class is bestowed and managed by the temple, It has to be all done inside the borders of Paladia. These two heroes haven’t been confirmed yet. Moreover, your majesty declared this information instead of the temple. It isn’t something you should have done. It shouldn’t have been done.”

“However, they are the heroes. They match the description released previously by the temple. Moreover, I saw them use skills and spells of at least 35 different Classes. How can they not be heroes?”

The emperor emphasized his words as he tried to dissuade the archbishop from nitpicking at the situation for no reason. The archbishop had no choice but to nod his head.

“I also do not doubt that they are heroes. However, they should have visited the temple before their identities were revealed. I was merely pointing out this fact. If the temple was involved, everyone would know for sure that they were given the Hero’s Class. There would be no doubt, and everyone could follow the heroes with an easy mind.”



“Mmm. You do have a point.....”

In his previous life, the hero had went through this process. Diaz, the temples and Paladia had pretty strong ties. This was why the hero of his past life had belatedly visited Paladia... However, Artpe knew about the disaster that had occurred at the end, so he wanted to leave Paldia alone.

‘It seems whatever I think about or worry about comes to pass. This is why being a hero is tiresome. Shit.’

That’s right. This was one of the reasons why Artpe hadn’t liked revealing the fact that he was a hero. He didn’t want to become involved with the temples. The temples liked to manipulate the situation. They made it look as if they had caused the heroes to descend into this world. They also liked to meddle in the affairs of the heroes.

“Everything that is done in the hero’s name has to be sanction by the temple. Of course, a hero hasn’t appeared in this world for several hundred years. It is understandable that your majesty didn’t know about this. I’m not trying to criticize your actions. I just want to request that you should be more careful in the future.”

“Mmm. Are you trying to excessively restrict the freedom of the heroes?”

“We are not trying to suppress the hero’s freedom. However...”

The archbishop's eyes shone.

“The hero’s mission is to confront the Demon King’s army. We just want to help them, so their work goes smoothly. That is why I want you to be more careful in the future.”

“Ah. Understood.”

Angelo Zard had just established his empire, and it would create a massive headache if he went against the temple. For now, Angelo Zard nodded his head as he gave a meaningful glance towards Artpe. He was asking Artpe as to whether he found all of this acceptable. Artpe gave a slight nod.

“Oh, heroes...”

As if he had been aiming for this moment, the archbishop changed his target.

“We’ve searched for the two of you for a very long time. Still, we waited until the parade ended. It almost makes us want to commend our own patience. We really felt...”

“Dude, get to the point.”

At Artpe’s words, the archbishop’s eyebrows rose. In the next moment, Maetel glared at him. She was like a devil that had crawled out of hell. His eyes dropped down. He was frightened by Maetel’s terrifying gaze.

“The pope is looking for both of you. Please come to Paladia. There is a divine revelation that was given as a preparation for the heroes. It will help you face the Demon king’s army. Moreover, the holy priestess is urgently waiting for both of you.”

When Maetel heard about the priestess, she took a firm grasp of Artpe’s arm. In the past, she said she wouldn’t mind if the number of women increased in their party, yet she had immediately used force like this. As expected, all women were liars!

“No.....!”

“Maetel...”

However, Artpe gently pried her arms from his, and he smiled at her.

“You can relax. I’ll explain it to you later, but you can rest comfortably.”

“.....I’ll rest easy then.”

Artpe soothed Maetel then he turned to look at the archbishop. The emperor thought Artpe was going to immediately cut off the archbishop’s head. Maetel started to look for a good moment to cut off the archbishop’s head. However, the words that came out of Artpe’s mouth betrayed everyone’s expectation.

“All right. Let’s go to Paladia.”

# Chapter 107

## It isn't Going as Planned (4)

“Hero.....?”

“Artpe!?”

When Artpe agreed to the archbishop’s request so easily, Maetel and the emperor became surprised. Even the archbishop became surprised.

“Y... you really want to go.....?”

“What? Didn’t you want me to go? You don’t want me to go now? Should I not go?”

“I... it isn’t like that!”

“All right. I want you to prepare a comfortable carriage that befits the station of the heroes. I also want you to gather a lot of guards too.”

“You are a proper snob... Koo-hmm. Understood!”

The temple had to advertise that the temple had a relationship with the heroes. They had to advertise this fact beyond the borders of Zard. That was why the archbishop was thankful for Artpe’s suggestion. The archbishop quickly nodded his head. The emperor and Maetel was still dumbfounded.

“Why.....?”

“Since it has turned out like this, let’s get ready, Maetel.”

“Why!?”

Artpe and Maetel rode the carriage prepared by the temple on the next day. The carriage was quite luxurious, and they were guarded by several dozen Warrior Priests and Holy Knights. They left Aedia. The act of roasting a peanut with lightning magic would be slower than this!

It was two days after they started traveling on the carriage. The carriage was rolling down Aedia's main road.

"Hoo-hnng. Hmm hmm hmm."

The view outside the carriage's window was passing by, and it was neither too fast or too slow. Maetel couldn't help but enjoy herself. She started humming a tune. Maetel had been taken aback in the beginning, but she was showing an upbeat attitude. It was quite the difference. Of course, Artpe knew why she was like this.

"Are you that glad.....?"

"Yes. We can do this for the rest of our lives, and I would still like it!"

Maetel tightly grabbed onto Artpe's sleeve with one hand. On the other side of him... No one was grabbing onto Artpe's remaining sleeve.

That's right. Artpe and Maetel was the only ones riding inside the carriage.

"Hero-nim, is there anything you need..."

"Don't disturb us. All right?"

"Yes, ma'am."

The priest had exquisite timing. He opened the door to the carriage as he pushed his head into the carriage. Maetel let out a kind smile as he pushed the priest out of the carriage. She once again closed the door.

The carriage started rolling again as if nothing had happened. Maetel once again put on a bright smile as she leaned into Artpe's body. There was a satisfied smile on her face.

"In Diaz, freshly married couples travel outside of their hometown. It is supposed to solidify the relationship between the couple. They witness things that they normally wouldn't see in their everyday lives. This custom is called the honeymoon trip. It is how the newly married couples greet their new lives. It feels like we are on a honeymoon. Right?"

"Many married couples lost all their belongings when they come across bandits. That

is why it is an abolished custom.”

“I’ll rip apart any bad bandits that tears apart a person’s moment of happiness.”

“Normally, a bride doesn’t possess the ability to rip apart a bandit like you.”

Artpe let out a sigh, and he lowered his shoulder. He wanted Maetel to be in a little bit more comfortable position. This small consideration made Maetel feel happy. Suddenly, Maetel asked him a question. She was curious.

“Artpe, why did we leave behind Sienna and Regina? Did you finally feel the need to treat me with care?”

“You are saying I have to get rid of all women near me if I want to treat you with care? Is that correct?”

“What else could it be.....?”

Before they left Aedia, the archbishop had asked Artpe about his other party members. Artpe had told him that Sienna and Regina were temporary party members. Heroes were the only ones that were important to the archbishop, so he easily accepted Artpe’s explanation.

This was how they had arrived at their current situation.

“Once the temple starts targeting us, they won’t let us go easily. Still, the fact that they are annoying doesn’t mean we should wipe out the temples. I worked hard to fix the image of the heroes in the minds of the people, so what would happen if I did that?”

“So?”

“That is why I’m pretending to accept the temple’s request with you. On the other hand, Sienna and Regina will continue to receive orders from me. They’ll take care of the work we have to do in our stead.”

Sienna was an Evil Reflector. Once the temple found out about her, they would focus on her once she entered Paladia. She would receive as much attention as the heroes. He made the right call in keeping Sienna apart from the temple.

“Regina and Sienna is really far apart with us in terms of level. This will give them time

to catch up with us. Moreover, this will allow us to move more freely until we finish our work in Paladia. Sienna has close combat abilities. Regina has long range fighting abilities including support capabilities. The two of them are a perfect party.”

“You have something to do in Paladia... Why do humans have so many problems?”

“It isn’t just humans. It is the same for all the other races capable of rational thought.”

Still, he wanted to leave Paladia to ‘others’. However, the other side had searched his party out first, so he had no choice. Since it had turned out like this, he would willingly go into their midst, and he would crush them.

“Still, it seems like we destroy every place we search out in recent days... I’m getting confused as to whether we are heroes or Demon King type beings.”

“I’m not sure. I have no idea if it would end even if we destroy them. It might not end even if we reconstruct them. We’ll have to see.”

“The premise of the two options you just stated involves destroying the temples...”

Was it because Maetel had gotten a bit smarter? It was harder for him to read what she was thinking about. Artpe tsked as he raised the Communication apparatus.

Of course, he didn’t forget about putting up a barrier inside the carriage before he used the Communication apparatus. It was a pretty high ranking barrier, so it repelled sound and physical damage. A being with decent power would exhaust oneself if one tried to break this barrier. This was obvious, but he hadn’t possessed this spell before this.

“I’m really glad I emptied out Aedia’s storage room before we left. I acquired a lot of useful magic.”

“When did you loot it? I didn’t see you do it.”

[Nyaa.]

“Ah, I see.”

Roa ate anything that was infused with Mana. Of course, Roa and Artpe wouldn’t forego the opportunity to find treasures. Artpe let out a smile as he turned on the



Communication apparatus. Then he opened his mouth.

“Uh, Silpennon.”

“Silpennon!?”

By the flow of their conversation, she had expected him to speak the name of Sienna or Regina. He betrayed her expectation! However, Artpe didn't care if Maetel's eyes opened wide or not. He spoke into the Communication apparatus.

“What's your level right now?”

[I'm level 218. What do you think? I'm pretty good, right?]

“Yes, you are pretty slow...”

[Koohk!]

Artpe had wanted Silpennon to be at level 250. It seemed this wasn't possible without Maetel's Growth Speed Multiplier. Silpennon grinded his teeth at Artpe's words

[What level are you!]

“283.”

[I lost.....]

It didn't matter if there was a level difference when they first met. Leveling became much harder when one climbed to the higher levels. This was especially true for those that were over level 200. A single level looked like a small difference, but the quality of one's ability was stark when one raised a level.

So how was he able to reach level 283? Silpennon had worked like hell for the past two years, yet he realized he couldn't catch up to Artpe no matter what.

“What about your party members?”

[Leseti is 208. Deyus is 206.]

Silepennon was a party member of the hero from his past life. He possessed a cheat-

like ability. When one took that into account, he could tell Leseti and Deyus had worked hard in increasing their levels. At their current level, Artpe decided they could carry out his immediate goal.

“Where are you right now?”

[I’m moving according to the map you gave us through your merchant. That is why we are... Ah. We are near Paladia.]

“Artpe?”

Maetel had overheard the conversation, and her eyes slightly narrowed. It seemed he had sent another map to Silpennon using Mycenae. This was the first time Maetel had heard about Silpennon’s party being near Paladia! This was why Artpe had a grin on his face.

“I told you I’ll leave this to someone else. Who else was I going to entrust this task to?”

[You’ll entrust us with a task? Ah. Are you talking about the items you wanted us to find and store?]

“No, I’m not. I want you to clear one more Dungeon, then I want you to immediately come to Paladia. Let’s meet up in Paladia.”

[You want us to meet up!? Are we finally joining your party?]

“I’ll make the decision after I see how you take care of this task.”

Artpe ended the call. Maetel let out a beautiful smile as she made a demand.

“Explain it to me.”

“It’s simple. I don’t want to get close to Paladia. Coincidentally, I have a good hand I can use in Silpennon. After he finished clearing all the Dungeons in Diaz, I gave him a map to the next region. Naturally, I made him move towards Paladia. I originally wanted to dump this task on him. For your information, I met Mycenae before we went into the ocean.”

“Your explanation is quite honest.....”

In truth, Paladia was much closer to Diaz than Aedia. Aedia was developed in terms of magic, but they were too far for the words of the gods to reach them. This was why there were more magicians that were trying to grow their own power instead of using the power of the gods.

“Basically, Paladia doesn’t really welcome magicians into their fold. I’m a hero, but my abilities are heavily slanted towards being a magician. That is why I was reluctant in going there. I don’t trust the temple, who are allied with gods. Moreover...”

Artpe once again checked his barrier, then he spoke in a lowered voice.

“I find the holy priestess to be annoying.”

“However, you still haven’t met her. She might be an innocent beautiful girl, who only eats dewdrops as she prays to the gods all day.”

“Your description of her is spot on. It is correct, but.....”

“Hmm. I’m right?”

Maetel’s expression turned menacing. If he praised the holy priestess’ looks a little bit more, it looked as if Maetel was about to do something very rash. That is why Artpe quickly changed the topic.

“She isn’t my cup of tea! I hate everything that is related to the gods.”

“Artpe always says a woman isn’t to your taste. However, they always like Artpe, and you aren’t able firmly reject them.”

It would have been a lie to say Maetel’s point didn’t hold any water. However, there was something he could say for certain in regards to the holy priestess.

“No, I don’t think the holy priestess will like me.”

“How can you be so sure? You haven’t met her yet. I understand Artpe has personal information of others, but you can’t guarantee that she won’t be to your taste, right?”

“Well, you do have a point, but.....”

In his past life, Artpe had seen the men that had developed relationship with the holy

priestess. That is why he knew her taste in men. If he spoke this truth, there was no point in hiding his past life to Maetel. In the end, he decided to gloss over this point.

“Anyways, you don’t have to worry about it. When my peaceful life as a dairy farmer becomes guaranteed, I don’t plan on getting involved with women.”

“Artpe just needs me, right? Hue hue...”

“.....if you are asking that question in a friendly manner, I would like you to take your hand off your sword hilt.”

He let out a sigh as he roughly tousled Maetel’s hair.

“You don’t have to be so insecure. Aside from few select people, most people aren’t permanent fixtures in a hero’s life.”

“Yes..... This all because Artpe is too handsome.”

Maetel stuck a bit closer to Artpe. Since they would have to meet up with another party in Paladia, it seemed she wanted to gather an ingredient that she could only acquire from Artpe.

Her intent was too apparent that he found it troubling. As he had these thoughts, Artpe took out a book. It was a very thick book encased in a leather binding. There was a serious amount of Mana within it. Maetel’s eyes shone.

“Isn’t that the magic tome from before?”

“Yeah. I’ve been lazy up until now. I should start using it now.”

It was the magic tome containing the essence of the Demonification curse. He had acquired it after killing the Demon Teana.

Of course, he had use it to guide Sherryl. It allowed her to become a Genesis Mermaid. He had poured a massive amount of Mana into the tome, and he was able to forcefully change the direction of the process enacted by the tome. That was why the magical tome was in a ambiguous state. However, he planned on transforming the magic tome by Reinforcing it with the ink he acquired from the Kraken and the Ancient Kraken.

“Let me check the content... Good. It is starting to become affected by my Record.”

“The magic tome is continuously letting out a light...”

“Its owner had changed, yet it hadn’t accepted this fact yet. It is resisting against me. Of course, its actions are useless.”

First, Artpe used the Kraken’s Ink Pouches as Reinforcement ingredients. Each Ink Pouch was Reinforced to the fullest extent, then they were combined into its final form. Then he dipped a quill into the ink.

[Nyaaaaaaaaa.]

“No, I’m aiming for a more ambitious goal.”

If he simply wanted an ability to destroy a curse, he already had Roa for that task. This was a magic tome created with the intent of transforming a human into a Demon. Artpe thought about completely flipping that process.

“.....this might be more important than anything we’ve done up to this point.”

“A focused Artpe is... Too cool...”

“Roa.”

[Nyaaa-ah nyaa.]

Maetel was in an aroused state. Artpe asked Roa to stop Maetel if she tried to jump him. He raised his pen, and he placed it on the first page of the magic tome.

They still had a lot of time left until they arrived at the Holy Nation of Paladia.

# Chapter 108

## Stagnant Water Puddle (1)

There were two oceans and a continent between Aedia and Paladia. It was a massive amount of distance. It would take several months to cross one ocean, then one had to travel on land before traversing a different ocean. However, they didn't have to take this route.

The temples possessed Warp Gates in various regions spanning the whole continent.

"So this is where they hid them."

"The location of the Warp Gates possessed by the temples are considered to be top secret. Of course, we are willing to expose their locations to the heroes. When the battle with the Demon King's army starts in earnest, you'll have many occasions to use it."

"On the other hand, if the location of the Warp Gates could be traced, it could really fuck us up."

"I'm confident that such a thing can't happen."

The priest's confidence was well founded. The performance of the Warp Gate was on par with the Warp Gates possessed by Aedia. When Artpe looked over the Warp Gate, he found out the reason why this was the case.

"There are traces of sunbae-nim left here too."

It wasn't just that. The previous hero had just renovated it. This Warp Gates were old even before the previous hero had put his hands on it.

These Warp Gates had existed throughout the everlasting history, and they had grown their abilities by eating the Records of countless other beings. They weren't simple Warp Gates. They were so advanced that they could be considered to be holy relics.

"We'll have to travel seven times through the Warp Gate. Before the Gate activates,

please imprint hero-nim's Mana into it..."

"Ah. Of course. I'll do that. Since the two of us always travel together, I'll be the only one that'll imprint my Mana on it."

For some reason, Maetel was happy about Artpe's gesture. The priest was taken aback, since Artpe wasn't following established protocols. There was no way the two heroes could be together at all times. However, the priest had no choice. He accepted Artpe's words.

"Mmm. Understood."

There were Warp Gates installed all over the continent, and they were all hidden. However, they were all tied together by a cord of Mana.

These Warp Gates needed permission from the temple to be used. There was a holy spell placed on them. It acted as a locking mechanism. However, if an individual was registered to be an 'owner' of one gate, one could freely use all of the other gates.

"It is time."

"It's like a walk in the park."

The priest activated the Gate, and Mana poured out of the Gate. The Mana reached out towards the whole party, but at Artpe's guidance, it was all gathered in his hand. While the priest and the holy knights were shocked by his Mana Control, Artpe quickly finished the registration.

"It really..... It is an ability befitting a hero."

"Of course, it is. I'm the hero. Let's go."

Before Artpe registered himself, the Mana pouring out of the Warp Gate had worked in opposition against Artpe. Now the Mana was like a warm and soft energy that was diffused around him. They immediately entered into the Gate, and soon, they arrived on a remote island located in the middle of the ocean.

"Huh?"

Maetel's eyes turned into dots when she saw the vast stretch of water in front of her.

Artpe grinned as he gave her an explanation.

“The priest said we have to go through seven gates. Of course, we have to cross the ocean in the process of doing so.”

“I see. So this island is...”

It wasn't just an island. There was a powerful barrier anchored to the Warp Gate, and it covered the entirety of the island. It was said the temples were the most powerful force within the human realm instead of Aedia. When one saw the structure of this spell, such an assessment sounded plausible. Artpe scanned the entirety of the island, then he nodded his head.

“As expected. I can see why you guys were able to protect the frontline against the Demon King's army in multiple wars. This probably allows you to maintain your power over the years.”

“.....it seems you have studied a lot after being designated the hero.”

These words weren't something a 15 year old should be saying. The priest asked in a dumbfounded voice. Artpe nodded his head as if it was nothing.

“When we left Diaz, I knew we would one day become involved with the temples. Of course, I made preparation for that eventuality.”

“We are the absolute allies of the heroes. You don't have to make such preparations... Actually, we were disappointed when both of you declined the summons of Diaz. That caused us to run in circles...”

“Ah. I don't like outside interference. I understand that you guys are trying take care of us, but you should back off at this point.”

“.....understood. I'm glad that you understand that point.”

Artpe rebuffed the priest nosing into his business. However, he couldn't help but break out into laughter.

The priest wanted blind trust, because they were absolute allies. It had been awhile since he had heard something so dumb.



Even if he could trust their character, that didn't mean he could trust their competence. A dumb ally was more dangerous than a smart enemy. Artpe had realized this fact when he watched the Demon king!

"These guys are worse than the Demon king. I'd rather trust Etna than you guys."

Fine white sand filled the sandy beach. Maetel laughed as she kicked the sand. As he watched Maetel's back, he confirmed a piece of information with the priest.

"So it is impossible to cross over to the next gate right now?"

"Yes, we need around four days for the Mana to be gathered."

"If I supply some of my Mana, I can cut that time into two days..."

".....if it is hero-nim, it really might be possible to do as you said."

Fortunately, not all priests were completely blind. They saw Artpe's skill when he seized control of the Warp Gate. The priest determined that Artpe wasn't making any false assertions, so he backed off in an acquiescent manner. Artpe poured his completely full Mana into the Warp Gate.

"Huh. Even if it recognized you as a user, a Mana with completely different nature was able to charge the Warp Gate..."

"Well, I just have to make the Warp Gate perceive my Mana in the same way as it perceives the ambient Mana in nature."

"You really have an incredible amount of knowledge in the way of magic..."

After spitting out the party, the Warp Gate had been emitting a subdued light. A more intense light was being emitted now. Of course, the amount of Mana within the Warp Gate couldn't transport Artpe's party, the priests and the holy knights all at once right now. It would be too burdensome.

"We have no choice, but to stay here for two days."

"That is why we've arranged accommodation here. I'll lead both of you to it."

"All right..... ah. Wait a moment."

Artpe looked at Maetel, who was playing on the beach with her heavy armor on. He smirked as he spoke.

“We’ll go after we play here for a little bit.”

“.....it seems both of you have a good relationship with each other. It looks very good.”

“Your expression doesn’t look too good.”

“That is..... The holy priestess is really looking forward to meeting the hero. However, the two of you are very close to each other, so I’m a little bit worried that there would be no room for the holy priestess between the two of you.”

“She’s been looking forward to meeting the hero... Me or Maetel?”

At Artpe’s mischievous question, the priest had a puzzled expression on his face.

“Of course, she is waiting for Artpe-nim. This is especially true when your exploits in Aedia were spread. Hmm... The rumor that Artpe-nim’s looks are exceptional has been spread across Paladia.”

“.....she’s waiting for me? Not Maetel?”

“That’s right. Of course, Maetel-nim is beautiful, but she...”

The priest shut his mouth. Artpe was also at a loss for words. An uncomfortable atmosphere developed between the two of them. Artpe was sensitive to such things, so Artpe backed off a little bit.

“I want you to go over there”

“The holy priestess isn’t waiting for her! She’s waiting for you!”

“I understand, so just go over there.”

Artpe chased away all the priests, then he approached Maetel. She was still playing with the sand...

“Artpe, look at this. The sand is white, and it is so fine!”

“It’s been awhile since you acted like a kid.”

“Huh?”

Maetel was too occupied by the white sands, so she didn’t completely catch what he had said. Artpe let out a bitter laugh as he spoke.

“Nothing. You should take off your armor and play.”

“I won’t be able to protect Artpe from unexpected situations if I take off my armor.”

“There won’t be any unexpected situation here. You don’t have to worried about that.”

“But.....”

“I’ll be alright.”

“.....ok. I’ll do as you say.”

She returned after she took off her red armor, which had been covering her upper and lower body. She came back with only light clothing on. Of course, her armor had gone through three Reinforcement, so their weight was negligible. Still, it couldn’t be compared to moving without the armor.

“Look! Look, Artpe! I’m leaving behind footprints! It is like running atop snow!”

“You are amused by all kinds of things.”

“Wa-hah! Ooh-heehee.”

Maetel had already seen the ocean in the port city of Frate. However, there were no beaches with sand there, so it had been impossible for her to play there. This was also true of the port city of Belata in Aedia.

She finally was able to enjoy the ocean in this place. It had been a long time since he had seen her enjoy herself like this. She was feeling pure joy. Artpe suddenly realized that he was also having fun.

“It seems even the temples can be helpful like this.”

Artpe mumbled to himself as he turned his head. He could see the priests and holy knights gathered near the accommodation provided on the deserted island. They were secretly watching Artpe and Maetel.

[Fuck off.]

“Heek!?”

“Wide Area Message spell!?”

He frowned at them. Artpe chased the men into the lodging. He didn’t want them to interfere in such a moment.

[Nyaa nyaa nyaa.]

“You want to play too?”

[Nyaa-ah nyaa-ah.]

“Roa, come here!”

When he released Roa, she transformed into her small cat form. She ran across the beach, and she chased down Maetel. The footprints of a girl and the paw prints of a cat were imprinted on the sandy beach, and they were being washed away by the ocean water. This sight automatically put a satisfied smile on his face.

“Instead of farming, it might not be too bad to live near the beach...”

Artpe carefully added a beach house to his retirement plan. Then he took off his robe and shoes. He returned with only his light clothing on.

As a finishing touch, he took out the branch of the World Tree from his Dimensional Pouch. He planted it on the beach. The branch’s wide leaves created a canopy, and it kept the sun off of him. The World Tree hadn’t given him the branch so he could block out the sunlight as an emergency measure. However, he didn’t care about that.

“Shall I continue my work?”

However, Artpe couldn’t work on his magic tome for long. Maetel wasn’t satisfied with playing only with Roa. She ran up to him, and she started urging him to come into the

ocean.

“Artpe, the ocean water is cold! It feels good! Let’s play!”

“No, it’s all right. I don’t want to compromise myself to such youthful follies. I’m suited to a dark life... Ooh-ahhhhhhhh!”

“Eh-eet!”

Artpe was trying to act dignified, but Maetel used her overwhelming physical ability to reverse the flow of the water. He was upended by the water. Thankfully, he was able to protect the Magic Tome and the Ink in time. However, that was the only thing he could protect. He had taken off all of his defensive gear, so he was soaked to his underwear.

“Really? I’m working right now. You are being annoying.....”

He quickly manifested his magic, and he floated into the air. Maetel’s eyes were still fixed on him. His hair was wet, and his underclothes were sticking close to his body. Maetel’s eyes spun when she saw this.

“Gulp.....”

“Why is your mouth watering?! Our roles are reversed!”

“Artpe, let’s play together...?”

“Ah, I’m already in a bad mood... Ooh-heck!”

Artpe sensed that his body was in danger. From that moment on, Artpe and Maetel started playing a game of tag. Something that was more precious than their lives were on the line. As if she found all of this pathetic, Roa cried out.

“Artpe, let’s play together!”

“What do you mean when you say you want to play with me! If you don’t give me an exact explanation, I’ll be put in a difficult spot! Hey! Stop trying to catch me! Roa, help me!”

[Nyaa nyaa nyaa.]

The heroes played tag for five hours. It continued until the sun set on the beach. Artpe performed a monumental feat. He didn't get caught by Maetel before she became tired and hungry. However, he received punishment from her as a consequence of his actions. She kept rubbing her cheeks against him during the entire dinner time.

They had to cross six more Warp Gates.

At each gate, Artpe didn't spare his Mana as he recharged the Gates with his Mana. It took them only two weeks to enter into the holy nation of Paladia.

# Chapter 109

## Stagnant Water Puddle (2)

[Oppa, you really are too much.]

“Please be a little bit more patient. I’ll end things here very soon, and I’ll head towards you guys.”

[You won’t give bait to a fish you’ve already caught. What a devilish method.]

“Where the hell did you learn such words?”

Artpe accepted the complaints that were being transmitted by Sienna and Regina. Then he gave them directions.

“If you travel north of Daitan, there is a Ice Continent called Glacia. It is a place where humans can’t live. I want you to go to the heart of Glacia before spring...”

After he ended the call with his party members, he let out a sigh as he raised his head. Maetel was staring at him.

“What?”

“How lucky. I want to go to the Ice Continent.”

“It’ll just be cold.”

“I can use the cold as an excuse to stick to Artpe.”

Artpe was dumbfounded, so he gave a retort.

“You are already sticking to me right now.”

“I’m already sticking to you, but I want to stick to you in a more aggressive and intense manner.”

At that point, Artpe wanted give up on rehabilitating the hero. It seemed Maetel realized the carriage ride was coming to an end, so she wanted to enjoy the current situation as much as possible. She was glued onto Artpe. She was in a state of nirvana. He started his next call as he accepted her feeling.

“Ajumma.”

[Please call me by Mycenae.]

“I want you to supply Sienna’s party for the last time. They are heading into Glacia.”

[That’ll be fine. I’m capable of entering into the Dungeons of Glacia. I’m a high rank Merchant now.]

“Next, I want you to supply Silpennon’s party for the last time. I want you to give them consumable explosive Artifacts and lock picking tools. I want them to be of the highest quality. We are all going to run amok in Paladia...”

[.....Arpe-nim, are you sure you are a hero?]

In some ways, Paladia was basically the home of the heroes. Mycenae’s voice stiffened when he said he would run amok in Paladia. However, Artpe replied in refreshing manner.

“The hero eliminates evil. However, I’ll tell you this beforehand. The standard of judgment as to what is evil is subjective. There is a stench coming from Paladia. It is the smell of evil.”

Since he retained his memories from his past life, Artpe could say this. Of course, others didn’t know this, so his words sounded very unreasonable.

[Why don’t you just become the Demon king!]

“Heroes are one step away from being seen as the Demon King, and the Demon king is one step away from being seen as a hero. Well, I made my request.”

[Wait a moment. If you think you can always end the call first, you are sorely mistak.....]

He ended the call with Mycenae. His last call was to Silpennon.



[You want us to infiltrate into the capital of Paladia?]

“Everyone in Lihazeta will be focused on the heroes. I want you to carry out your task during that time period. Leseti and Deyus will only be there for support. You’ve grown your skills as a thief, and I want you to use that skill in earnest this time.”

[Artpe... Can you give me more details? What exactly do you want me to steal? I think it is time for you to reveal some information.]

Silpennon’s request was reasonable. Artpe cleared his throat. He nodded his head as he spoke.

“Lihazeta’s city is subdivided, and it is based on the ranks of the priests. You already know this, right?”

[Of course.]

“Some regions can be accessed by outsiders, but there is a region accessible only to the holy priestess, pope, several high rank priests and the heroes. They call this place the Zero Class.”

[I never heard of this Zero Class...]

“I want you to completely clean out the Zero Class region. That is what I wanted to ask of you.”

[Dude! Your words don’t add up! I’m an outsider, so how am I supposed to get in there!]

Ah. How long had it been since someone resisted against his plans? He had missed it! In recent times, Maetel and Sienna started pushing back against his plans, but on a basic level, they always followed his directions. This was why he had been a bit disappointed. However, it was as if Silpennon had broken apart this feeling of frustration felt by Artpe.

However...

“It is as I’ve said. Heroes can enter into the Zero Class.”

[So what?]

“When I enter into the city, I’ll make a move. You’ll just have to take advantage of this. It is like a backdoor. You should enter at night. I’ll somehow make it so that you’ll be able to enter that region tonight.”

[.....]

These were words that shouldn’t be uttered by someone that was called the hero. He was about to enter into the capital of the holy nation of Paladia. He would be escorted by priests and holy knights as he headed into heart of Lihazeta. This was something that shouldn’t be spoke by someone like him! While Silpennon was silent from the dismay he felt, Artpe continued to speak.

“There are many suspicious things going on in Paladia. You already know this. I want you to bring out all the details. I want you to show the world the true nature of the temples. That is my plan.”

[All right. Let us say that the temples are hiding something, and I miraculously find out this secret. How are you going to spread this truths to the continent?]

“That is a really good question! In truth, I will use a magic technique developed by Aedia. I brought several Video Transmission devices.”

[You evil bastard!]

It felt as if Artpe was playing atop of Silpennon’s head. Silpennon couldn’t nitick any of Artpe’s actions. It felt as if Artpe was even prepared for a pestilence that would sweep over the continent in several hundred years!

[Understood. I’ll try to infiltrate them... Truthfully, I’m not confident I can do it.]

“Don't trust in yourself. Trust in your Artifacts. You emptied out Diaz’s entire past to arm yourself. You can do it!”

[Even if you have to lie to me, I would like you to cheer me up! You really are the worst!]

“Hang in there, Silpennon!”

[You have no talent in cheering other people up! Hmmph. You hang in there too!]

Silpennon grumbled as he ended the call. He was now done with contacting those that

were on the outside. It would be practically be impossible to contact anyone outside for the near future. He just had to put faith in everyone that they could work well in concert with each other.

Artpe put away his communication device then he raised his head with a refreshed expression on his face. However, Maetel was glaring at him with a sulking expression on her face.

“Artpe, why do you like Silpennon so much? Do you perhaps like men better than women? Is that it?”

“He’s the only intellectually honest comrade I have. You don’t have to worry too much about it.”

“Your words are making me worry more!?”

Before Maetel’s interrogation could start in earnest, someone knocked on the door to the carriage.

“We’ve arrived. We are hoping to show the esteemed faces of the heroes to the people of Paladia. It’ll be a parade where everyone will celebrate...”

“It’s another parade?”

“This is what happens when you become a hero. Still, you should be thankful that you didn’t have to go through from a young age.”

“That... Yes, please forgive us.”

The priest didn’t know what to say when confronted with Maetel’s complaints and Artpe’s weirdly philosophical view of this situation. The priest asked for their forgiveness. Artpe and Maetel immediately exited the carriage. There were countless people gathered there.

“Wa-ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!”

“They are the heroes that were born in this generation!”

“They look exactly like their description. However...”

“There really are two of them. Both of them are heroes?”

The people were tilting their head in puzzlement. It was understandable. Even after being named a hero, Artpe had a headache trying to reconcile the idea of two heroes.

“Please come this way. We’ll travel once around the outskirts of the city then we will head into the great temple. You’ll be blessed there, then we’ll head into the inner city. That is our schedule.”

“All right.”

Artpe dragged along Maetel, who hated all of this. They moved towards a new mode of transportation. There were holy knights in shining armor waiting for them. They surrounded the vehicle as escorts.

“This vehicle was made with magic.”

“That’s right. The previous hero cooperated with the temple in creating this treasure.”

Artpe and Maetel ignored the priest, who had spoken with a bit of pride in his voice. They moved into the raised seats, so they could greet the people.

It was a parade vehicle infused with the previous hero’s magic. It was impossible for the passengers to lose balance on the vehicle, and it could rise into the air. It could reach an altitude of several dozen meters. When they were floating in the air, they were able to see the design of the city. This city was built as the very last line of defense. It was the final stronghold in the fight against the Demon King’s army. This was why the entire city of Lihazeta was acting as a defensive magic circle. They caught sight of the capital of the holy nation Paladia.

“Wow. The city looks like it was made from toys.....”

The city was built with a plan in mind. Of course, the various building inside the city was neat and pretty. When she looked down at the city, Maetel’s eyes shone. Artpe nodded his head as he gave her an explanation.

“It looks really neat, right? Of course, it’ll all be destroyed once the Demon King’s army invades this place. Actually, there is a more horrifying magic built into this place. It’ll activate once this place is destroyed. Aren’t you reassured thinking about it?”

“Arpte is a master of breaking apart a person’s dream.”

In some ways, this city was similar to the capital of Aedia. However, the city of Lays’ magic circle merely functioned as an underground sewer system. Lihazeta’s magic circle had the ability to reduce the power of the Demon king’s army. Its function was completely different from Aedia’s magic circle.

Depending on the situation, the magic circle was unspecialized, so several types of magic could be activated at the same time. If one focused on the power of one type of magic, it turned into a amplification type magic circle...

“My head! My head hurts so much, Artpe! Ooh-goo-ahhhhhhh!”

“All right. I won’t explain it any more...”

If he was to simplify his explanation, the previous hero’s had a hand in constructing this place. He wondered if he’ll be able to find out the identity of the high and mighty sunbae-nim. Artpe was looking forward to it a little bit.

Rather than making something new with his own hands, it was more enjoyable to use something someone else had already built!

It had been awhile, but Artpe became engrossed in thoughts that was befitting the weakest amongst the Four Heavenly Kings. While he was having such thoughts, the parade finally started.

“Maetel-nim! You grew up to be very beautiful!”

“Artpe-nim, please look over here? He’s exquisite?”

“Oo-ook. There are too many gazes.”

“Cheer up, Artpe.”

They had already experienced being in a parade in Aedia. However, they had shared the spotlight with the emperor. This time the spotlight was solely on the two of them. The burden and the heat of their attention was twice as strong.

“Artpe-nim is too cool!”

“Maetel-nim!”

“Artpe-nim!”

“Kyaaaaaaaaahk! Artpe-nim looked this way!”

.....it was quite strange. There were more instances of people calling out for Artpe rather than Maetel. It felt weird. He turned to look at Maetel, and as expected, he caught sight of Maetel’s twisted smile.

“Hey, you are in front of people! Keep your face together! Control your expression!”

“But those people... How dare they say that to my Artpe...”

“Is that why you are angry!?”

Despite his warning, Maetel’s rage meter filled up everytime she heard women scream Artpe’s name. Artpe was careful in not antagonizing Maetel. This was why he was very timid in his hand waving.

“I think the male is the true hero? Look! Look! The girl keeps scowling.”

“However, the priests said they will be guiding both of them onto the road of the heroes. The priests are those that deliver the messages from the gods. We dare not doubt their words.”

“Everything will become clear when they meet the pope.”

Artpe smirked when he heard the conversation going on between the throng of people. Maetel didn’t know why he was laughing, so she poked at his thigh. Then she whispered in a voice that could only be heard by Artpe.

“When we return, I’ll kiss you 100 times.”

“.....if you are punishing me, kissing doesn’t sound like a great punishment.”

“I’m not giving Artpe a punishment. It is a reward you are going to give me for being patient...”

“Don’t I have to agree to it! Hey!”

The parade through Lihazeta was moving at a much slower pace than the parade they had participated in Aedia. It made the two heroes tired. Moreover, they had to move through the outer city and the inner city to get the holy ground. When they arrived at the great temple, they were allowed to rest.

“Do you feel any gazes on us?”

“I feel none.”

When the two of them left behind the crowd, they let out a sigh of relief. Maetel and Artpe leaned against each other. The priests and holy knights let out a bitter laugh when they saw this.

It happened at that moment...

“I’ve been waiting for you, hero-nim”

Maetel’s body tensed when she suddenly heard a woman’s clear voice. Artpe and Maetel turned around at the same time.

“My name is Vadinet Kuareu Paladia. Please call me by Vadinet.”

There was a black haired girl that looked to be of similar age as the two heroes. She really was a innocent and beautiful looking girl. She looked as if she had grown up eating only dew.

# Chapter 110

## Stagnant Water Puddle (3)

‘Ah. That crazy priestess finally made her appearance... ’

He had such idle thoughts as he saw the girl. She had black hair and blue eyes. Maetel instinctively hid Artpe behind her back. The girl, who had revealed her name as Vadinet, caught sight of this. She covered her mouth as she giggled in a demure manner. Maetel found the sight of Vadinet to be very nauseating.

“You don’t have to be so vigilant against me. I am still inexperienced, but I am called the holy priestess of Paladia. I was basically born to help the hero-nim.”

[Nyaa-ah.]

“Oh my. What a cute cat.”

Roa suddenly pushed her head out from within Artpe’s robe, and she let out a small cry as she watched the holy priestess. Artpe put Roa on his shoulder, and he patted her.

“You have to stay still for now. I’ll tell you when you will be able to play.”

[Nyaa-ah.....]

“It is as if she understands human speech.”

[Nyaa]

“Oh my.”

Roa let out a cry as if she was answering the holy priestess. Vadinet once again giggled. When she saw this, Maetel became more guarded. Until now, an innocent pretty girl like her had never appeared around Artpe. Maetel was worried that Artpe’s heart might lean towards a girl like her, so Maetel did her best to stop Artpe from meeting her!



“You really are acting like an idiot. You should step aside, Maetel.”

“But!”

“I’ll guide you into the temple. There is a blessing that we’ve prepared for the hero-nim from a long time ago. I’ll be able to carry it out immediately.”

“Yes, let’s head in.”

“Ooh-mmmmmm.”

[Nyaa-ah. Nyaa nyaa nyaa-ah.]

Artpe, Maetel and Roa were like country hicks. They were rubbernecking at the great temple as they followed the holy priestess. Several dozen priests and knights followed behind them as escorts, so it was a sight to behold.

“I feel the trace of a thick Mana, Artpe... Aren't Mana supposed to be circulated? Is it ok to keep it hostage in one place for so long?”

“They aren’t keeping the Mana hostage. This is what the Artifacts and magic circles are for. If the Mana was stored without the now-how, the Mana would either decay or it would run out of control. However, the Mana you are feeling right now is being directed towards amplifying or purifying the magical energy within the great temple. The great temple primarily filters the Mana. Secondarily, the city’s magic circle is connected to the great temple, and it purifies the Mana. That is why a normal priest could replicate powers of a high rank priest in this place.”

“You really are enlightened in the ways of magic. Even I became focused on your calm and logical explanation...”

The holy priestess had been walking in front of them in the hallway. She turned around to look at Artpe, and she had a smile of favorable impression on her face. Maetel poked Artpe in the back, and Roa cried out as if she found this all to be pathetic. However, the holy priestess wouldn’t drop the subject once she became interested in it.

“When I heard that you refused to affiliate yourselves with any country, I personally became concerned. However, it seems your actions have resulted in you gaining deeper knowledge. Moreover, you now possess excellent skills and ability. In the end, your decision was the correct one.”

“The food in the palace taste ba... Ooh-boohp.”

“No. It’s nothing”

“Yes...”

The holy maiden was puzzled when she saw Artpe block Maetel’s mouth. However, her smile returned as she turned around. She led them deeper into the temple.

“This is our destination.”

“Wah-ah.”

It took them 5 more minutes to reach the cathedral. The mana of light was focused there. The altar was letting out a subdued light. There was also an enormous cross that signified the advent of the gods and the land of the humans. Behind these items, there was an open space that reminded one of a massive square. Maetel, who had been in a poor mood, let out an exclamation when she saw this.

“It is a place filled with really warm Mana.”

“If Lihazeta is the heart of Paladia, the great temple is the heart of Lihazeta. It is as Artpe-nim explained earlier. This place is where the purified Mana is gathered.”

Of course, there was another central location. It was the Zero Class area, but she declined to mention this. She moved towards the Altar. Other priests were waiting for them there. However, when she lightly shook her head, the priest moved to the side as they lined up in rows. She was able to stand at the heart of the altar.

“It is the duty of the holy priestess to bless the hero-nim. We’ll finish the ceremony here. After a brief break, we’ll start the second half of the parade. We’ll move into the inner city.”

“Do we really have to be blessed?”

“Yes.”

Unexpectedly, the one to answer Maetel was Artpe instead of the Holy Maiden.

“This is a blessing given to the heroes. It is the most simple method that will allow us

to prove that we are heroes. Moreover, there is a lot of Mana concentrated here. The bonus that we will gain from it would be significant. It might also give us an additional Record that I don't know about."

"Ah, Artpe-nim."

Vadinet was taken aback by Artpe's frank explanation. On the other hand, Maetel tilted her head in puzzlement as she asked a question.

"However, we don't have Class upgrades. I thought we are able to learn skills and spells from all Classes?"

"Yes, we will receive a blessing on top of that. That is why it is an absolute cheat."

"I see!"

"Ah-ooh-ooh."

Vadinet was taken aback when she was confronted with the thought process of the bad hero! On the other hand, Artpe was smiling a smile of triumph inside.

'It is a blessing. I knew about it, but I thought it was insignificant compared to the annoyance I would experience here. However, the pure Mana gathered here is beyond my imagination. Since events have been hastened everywhere else, I thought it would be the same here. This is unexpected... '

Since things have already turned out like this, it would be a waste if they didn't receive the blessing. Artpe led Maetel forward as they stood in front of the altar. The holy priestess' eyebrows twitched by a minute amount.

"Then..... I'll start the blessing."

"Please."

The holy priestess raised both her hands a little bit higher. Artpe could feel all the Mana within the great temple gather into her hands. Moreover, there was the altar, which had been created for the express purpose of the hero's blessing. It was a holy artifact that had stored Mana, which didn't hold a speck of impurity. The altar was letting out a golden light.

“Pretty.....”

“Shhh.”

The holy priestess' blue eyes turned into gold. This was evidence that she was raising her holy power to its limit! The priests and holy knights were witnessing a sacred moment, so their voices of admiration automatically rose in volume. Artpe was monitoring the Mana reaction that was occurring with his Read All Creation ability. The information was being delivered to him.

However, when the holy priestess' eyes widened, Artpe sensed something was off for the first time.

‘Will you look at this?’

There were two heroes. Of course, the blessing would have to be split equally. As the holy priestess sacrificed the holy artifact to active the permanent blessing spell, the blessing was being directed towards one person. In other words,. It had locked onto Artpe.

‘They are already starting their little game... Or maybe it is like the civilians outside. Maybe, there are some here that can't accept the fact that there are two heroes?’

It was unbelievable! This was so ridiculous! A priest affiliated with the temple had determined that Artpe and Maetel were both heroes. Both of them were true heroes, and they had acted accordingly up until now. The holy priestess was the central figure of the temple, yet she was discriminating against Maetel!

“Oh god. Please let your warm hands touch those that are qualified.”

‘La-di-da.’

Artpe realized that he had gone soft on this matter. It didn't matter how the business in Paladia was progressing. The holy priestess was crazy from the start!

“No lies will remain. Please show us only the true hope.”

The priestess' blessing was heading towards its zenith. The overwhelming amount of holy power gathered at the end of her hands were waiting for the moment where it would be able to descend on the hero. The holy power was being amplified as it was

once again purified itself. The holy power was taking shape.

While this was going on, Artpe used Mana Link to tether his Mana to Maetel's Mana. Maetel sensed what was going on, so she raised her head in confusion. Artpe gave a light wink, and strangely enough, Maetel picked up on the meaning behind his gesture.

She activated her Record Divide. Maetel and Artpe shared each other's Records. They were already linked by Mana Link, so the bond between the two became stronger. Since both of them were heroes, they were able to achieve unity.

"Ah. Ah ah ah."

Maetel let out a sound as if she was loving what was going on. She was almost dead from pleasure. Normally Artpe didn't open himself up to this extent. In reality, this was the first time she had established a true connection to Artpe.

Artpe wanted to flick Maetel on the forehead, but he didn't want to reveal their actions to the holy priestess. Therefore, he kept silent.

"Oh god, please descend upon us!"

The holy priestess' chant finally came to an end. The golden light containing the overwhelming amount of Mana fell onto Artpe... It was being shared with Maetel.

".....huh?"

The holy priestess's voice expressed the confusion she was feeling.

It was an expression that said, "This can't be?"

Artpe put on a reverent expression as if he didn't know what was going on.

"Wah-ahh. Artpe."

"Shh. Just enjoy the show."

Since the blessing was sent out, the holy priestess was no longer in control of the blessing. The powerful energy of the blessing touched Artpe, and it flowed into Maetel. Her Record was a complete Replica of Artpe's Record. This was why half of the energy flowed into her. Everything went so smoothly that it looked as if the blessing had gone

as the holy priestess had intended.

The energy settled within the two heroes. Finally, a wing with feathers made out of golden light sprouted from their backs. The holy priestess couldn't suppress her shock when she saw this.

"How can this be....."

A wing appeared on Artpe's left shoulder, and another wing appeared on Maetel's right shoulder.

"Ah ah. So beautiful."

"There is one wing on each hero's shoulder. They have to be together for them to have a whole wing."

"Since it like this... I have no choice but to accept it. This generation has two heroes. No one made a mistake in determining this. The two of them will rely on each other to magnificently take down the Demon King."

"The sight of them warms my heart."

In the moment of the blessing, a wing had sprouted from the shoulders of Artpe and Maetel. Since the two heroes were connected by the Record Divide, the two wings fluttered in rhythm. It was quite surreal. Then the wings withdrew into their body.

If both their clothes were removed, there would be a small tattoo of a golden wing placed on their shoulder blade.

"This shouldn't..."

After the blessing ceremony came to an end, the great temple regained its original appearance. Despite this fact, the holy priestess looked unsatisfied. She looked taken aback as she kept grasping at the empty air with her hands.

However, the holy artifact was gone. The Mana prepared for the blessing ceremony was completely consumed. Even if she wanted to reverse this, she couldn't.

"What's wrong, Vadinet?"

Artpe acted dumb as he slyly asked the question. It looked as if Artpe was truly worried for her. Vadinet bit her lips. A small amount of tear formed near her eyes.

“It is nothing. The blessing ceremony was successfully... It’s finished.”

“Thank you for working so hard for us.”

“No... I should be the one thanking you. This is my first time doing the blessing ceremony, so I was nervous... Thankfully, I was able to carry it out successfully.”

Artpe wanted to burst out into laughter. He had to try really hard to suppress his laughter. Maetel finally realized what was going on, so she wanted to hit Vadinet once. She was having a hard time restraining herself.

“If you are exhausted... Why don’t you take a break?”

“You do look exhausted.”

“Y... yes. In truth, I am feeling a bit... I have to accompany both of you in the parade. I’m sorry, but please wait until I feel better.”

“All right. Rest to your heart’s content.”

Artpe waved his hand as he sent her off. When he saw Vadinet turn around, he thought about taking a rest. However, at that moment, a very faint light started to emanate from Artpe and Maetel at the same time.

At that moment, there was a short snippet of memory that flowed into Artpe’s head...

“Artpe.....?”

“End it!”

At Artpe’s cold words, Maetel quickly cancelled the Record Divide. Artpe’s expression had turned unimaginably rough. Maetel knew that the situation was very serious. She looked like she was about to cry as she gave an excuse.

“I’m sorry, Artpe. I didn’t mean to deepen the connection. My skill was suddenly strengthened, and it worked without regards to my own will,”

“I know it isn’t your fault. It’s fine. Don’t cry.”

“Hoo-oo. But Artpe looks really mad right now.”

The explanation to what had occurred was extremely simple. The output of the Record Divide had suddenly increased, and the Record between Artpe and Maetel had synced more than ever before.

As a result, their memories had flowed into each other.

“I’m not mad.”

“Hoo-ee. I’m sorry. I’m sorry, Artpe. Hoo-eeee.”

He said he wasn’t mad, but Maetel continued to cry. He let out a sigh. However, if everything was fine, he would have consoled her by hugging her. He wasn’t able to do that.

He had almost revealed his past life to her.

In truth, his heart was beating fast. He knew it wouldn’t happen, but he was afraid that everything would be conveyed to her if he touched her again.

This all happened because...

‘Fucking sunbae-nim! You should have told us that the strengthening would happen when we receive the blessing!’

With exquisite timing, the Unique skill and spell became strengthened. It was all sunbae-nim’s fault!



# Chapter 111

## Stagnant Water Puddle (4)

The hero's party stood atop a land that was dyed black with the blood of Demons and Mana. They were confronting a girl, who had once been a member of the hero's party

"I cannot accept it."

"Calm down, Vadinet. I want you to look straight at me."

"I am looking straight at you! Only you! Not the hero, but you!"

The city of Lihazeta had preserved its sanctity for several hundred years. However, the city had fallen at the hands of the Demons and the hero's party. As intended, the hero's party had stopped the horrific machinations of the Demon King's army, but the only person capable of reversing the situation had fallen. She had made her own decision to corrupt herself.

"How come you're not the hero? Why! Why!"

"Why does it matter who is the hero! We all have to help Maetel in defeating the Demon King! That is our goal!"

"No, that isn't my goal... I've been patient, but I can no longer be patient!"

The fallen holy priestess raised her staff, and her eyes were dyed red.

"I cannot accept this reality..... I cannot accept the fact that you're not the hero."

"Vadinet....."

"Stop looking at me with those eyes!"

The hero was trying to persuade the holy priestess by any means possible. However, the hero was tired from the battle. Her tired eyes were read as her looking down at the holy priestess.

The hero gritted her teeth. She knew her entire existence was being denied by the holy priestess. The thief stepped forward instead of her.

“Vadinet, we worked together to defeat the Demons... We defeated the corrupt temple. We also rebuffed the Demon King’s ambition for the human realm... We worked hard to minimize bloodshed, and we were somehow able to stop them. So why are you doing this?”

“This isn’t the dream I had... I didn’t go through all the strenuous training, so I can become the maid of honor!”

“Pathetic!”

The warrior rebuked her, but his words weren’t registered in the holy priestess’ ears.

“Yes, now I can see why the temple cooperated with them. There is a difference between what they learned and what they wanted to protect. Surely, they became sick and tired of the difference. It is the same with me. The goal of my life has been shattered into pieces. Yes. I’m sick and tired of it too! As it stands, I don’t like any of this!”

“They were merely dancing to the Four Heavenly King’s tune. We exposed their conspiracy! We even sacrificed the capital to stop their plot. Please, Vadinet!”

“Pffft, hoo-hoo-hooht.”

The holy priestess laughed.

“No, their plan hasn’t ended yet.”

“What?”

“You should know about this by now? I’m the one that leaked their secret to you. I’m the one that led you by the nose to bring about this situation.”

“Vadinet.....?”

The hero felt something was wrong. She was taken aback as she unsheathed her sword. Unfortunately, the situation had reached the precipice where nothing could be done.

“All of Lihazeta was made by incorporating magic circles. When needed, it can be compressed to function for a single purpose. It is possible to change its shape. Moreover, the magic circle is more than optimized thanks to the mayhem caused by the Demons. Yes, the plan was a success... it was a success only for me.”

All the black Mana in the region was focused solely on her. In a flash, her energy was amplified. The energy was headed towards a direction that shouldn't be traversed. The energy was endless, and there was no limit to it.

In the end, the overwhelming Mana altered the existence called the holy priestess.

“Vadinet, you...”

“I hate my position as the holy priestess. I also hate the fact that Maetel is the hero. However, I cannot change Maetel. That is why I have no choice but to change myself.”

“Everything we’ve worked so hard to achieve...!”

The thief, Silpennon, yelled out loud. The woman, who used to be a holy priestess, snickered when she saw him. Her eyes were completely dyed red, and demonic wings shot out from her shoulder blades. It was proof that she had lost her holiness.

“Silpennon, my love. This is the only way for us.”

They couldn’t believe what was occurring in front of their eyes, but they had no choice. In the end, they had to accept it.

They always believed that the priestess would protect them from their side. However, she had fallen as a human to become a Demon.

Maetel kept crying as she apologized. However, it took a little bit of time before Artpe was able to console Maetel. When he made sure that the Record Divide was completely canceled, he took a deep breath as he carefully approached Maetel. He hugged her.

“Hee-ggoohk. I’m sorry...”

“It’s all right. I was just a little bit surprised.”

“I’m sorry.”

“Yes yes.”

Maetel had been crying like a child, and she was barely able to calm down after Artpe hugged her. He hadn’t approached her for a while, so she had been afraid that Artpe’s displeasure towards her was absolute. When Artpe consoled her, she was finally able to relax.

“Artpe, you really aren’t mad?”

She was nestled within his hug. Maetel looked up with tearful eyes as she asked him a question. Artpe let out a bitter laugh as he wiped away the tears near her eyes.

“I’m not mad.”

“I’m sorry. From now on, I won’t kiss you when you say you don’t like it.”

“In truth, it isn’t as if I hate it.”

“Then I can continue to kiss you when you are asleep?”

“.....”

Artpe stared at Maetel as he asked her a question.

“How many times did you do that?”

“Ooooh-mmmmm.....”

Maetel had gone into her docile mode of behavior. She thought long and hard before she shook her head from side to side. However, the words that came out of her mouth was quite the spectacle.

“Artpe, do you remember the number of times you ate bread.....?”

“Get away from me. We’ll definitely sleep in different rooms from now on.”

“Ah-oooooh. I’m sorry! I’m sorrrrrrry! Anything but that!”

It felt as if she had fallen in a trap that she couldn’t escape from. He turned passive as he let out a big sigh, and he mussed her hair.

“I know you didn’t do it on purpose. Still, you shouldn’t see my memories without my permission.”

“Yes, I won’t see it. I’ll only see the ones that Artpe shows me.”

“.....all right. That is enough.”

At times, he got the feeling that her words were incongruous with her normal self. The current situation was like that. However, when Artpe saw Maetel’s innocent eyes, he shook off such uneasy feelings.

“You didn’t see much, right?”

“Yes. Arpte reacted so fast that I didn’t see anything. I also canceled the skill really fast. I did well, right?”

“Yes, you did well.”

“Hoo-hee.”

When Maetel was completely sure that Artpe was no longer mad, she was able to ask him the question. She continued to hold his hand tight.

“That means Artpe’s spell was strengthened too?”

“Yes. That damned sunbae-nim didn’t say a single word about the blessing...”

Over a year ago, they had visited a temple where the Ancient Kraken was sealed by the previous hero. They were able to absorb a skill book and a spell book that had been prepared by him.

Sunbae-nim had been firm in his words that the items would strengthen their Unique skill and spell. However, their Unique skill and spell hadn’t been strengthened, and it had caused them much confusion. The strengthening happened today!

Of course, it only occurred after a massive amount of Mana from an outside source was injected into them. From the beginning, maybe it was intended to be completed through the blessing. As the possessor of the Read All Creation ability, Artpe was unsure if that was true. However, the process had been too seamless, so it was possible.

If he could make one guess, the sunbae-nim might have thought the receiving of the blessing from Paladia was a given. It had been the same with the sunbae-nim's grave. He had expected the next generation's hero to find it.

"That damned sunbae-nim. I'll find everything he left behind, so I can look down on him."

"Even when Artpe moves with shady intentions, he is cool."

Artpe tried to manifest a single Mana String as a test. He didn't even need conscious thought to bring it out, and the Mana String was of similar thickness as his previous ones. However, the amount of Mana within it was in a state of flux. It felt as if it was an extension of Mana.

"The Mana String becomes a spell, and the energy of the spell is released again to be made into a Mana String. It's possible to do this?"

He didn't have to manifest it as a simple thread. The current Mana String was pushing the boundary of freedom given to Mana. He could imbue physical characteristics over the magical energy, and he could manufacture it into any shape. Even after manufacturing Mana into a shape, it could be changed into a spell.

"This is no longer the Mana String..... I see."

As always, Maetel had been staring at Artpe. His eyes met hers. Artpe's figure was contained within her clear green eyes.

[Artpe]

[Human]

[Hero]

[Level : 283]

[Strength : 619 Agility : 581 Stamina : 708 Magical Energy : 2,674]

[Hero's Aura Lv1]

[Materialization Lv1]

"I became Initialized again!"

"Huh?"

"Nothing."

He had thought it was a simple matter of his spell being strengthened. It seemed there was a name change, and he had to start over from level 1! Of course, the Record of his spells up to now was still there, so his spell was a level 1 spell that wasn't a level 1 spell. Still, he would be lying if he said he wasn't a bit dejected by it.

'Materialization? What do I materialize? Do I materialize my imagination? Ideal? Do I get to materialize whatever I want? If so, this is the terminal end of magic!'

Of course, there wasn't anything Artpe couldn't do with his original Mana String. He wasn't just merely using a spell. He embodied the spell as a whole, and in that aspect, there wasn't much difference between the hero and the Demon King! No, when he thought about it in this term, they seemed very similar!

'Still, there are a lot of restrictions... '

If there weren't any restrictions, he could basically conclude the tale of the hero. Of course, there were restrictions. If he tried to materialize a spell that wasn't in the form of a thread, he would have to consume Mana to an abnormal degree. Even with Artpe's massive reservoir of Mana, he couldn't add elaborate conditions to the Materialization spell.

'All right. I'll gradually research this. On the other hand, I have a newly acquired skill called the Hero's Aura.'

It was a congruous skill between those that possessed the matching tattoo on their shoulder blade. Even if they tried to use the skill, the only benefit that would come from it was an emission of golden light. Other functions would probably be added when the skill level rose. Of course, the hero from his previous life didn't possess this

skill...

Lastly, their status had risen.

Artpe was a hero. He possessed high strength and agility stats. It was so high that he couldn't be compared to other magicians.

However, he had received an overwhelming amount of Mana and the Record within the holy relic. As his magical energy increased, his strength, agility and stamina increased alongside it. Even if he didn't have magic, he could credibly mimic high rank Warrior over level 200.

Then there was the fact that he was capable of strengthening his body with magical energy. If so, would he be comparable to a lvl 250 Warrior?

"Anyways, this was a boon for me. Maetel, you also..."

"Yes, my skill... Ooh-mmm. I think it's called the Record Master."

Artpe had been strengthened in totality. It was the same for Maetel. She had gained the Hero's Aura like him. All her stats were boosted, and the Record Divide had evolved. It couldn't be compared to before.

If she wanted, she could steal someone else's Record. She wouldn't need permission. She also could give her Record to someone else without any restrictions.

".....I made it clear that you can't do it."

"Artpe's level is so high that I probably can't even attempt it on you. Don't worry about it."

Maetel didn't want to make Artpe mad again, so she waved her hands. Then she suddenly discovered the presence of the priests and the holy knights. They had been there all along. She pulled at the sleeve of Artpe's robe.

"Artpe, they are looking at us with strange eyes."

"It is understandable. The heroes finally received their blessing, yet we look to be romancing each other right now. Of course, they would look at us with such eyes."



“R... romancing.....”

Maetel’s eyes turned starry. Artpe realized that he had unintentionally turned on her switch.

“I meant that it looks like that on the surface.”

“I see. From the perspective of other people, we already look like that.”

“Ah..... Yes. I guess so.”

“Ooh-hee. I see.”

It was hard to believe that she had been crying until a moment ago. She had an unimaginably bright smile on her face. Artpe was thankful that Maetel felt better, but he kept letting out a sigh.

It was at that moment that the holy priestess returned to them. She had come back after controlling her emotions.

“Now... The two of you will have to accompany me in the parade that is heading towards the inner city.”

“Yes. Please watch over us.”

This was how the march towards the inner city started. Artpe, Maetel and the holy priestess Vadinet were having different thoughts as the parade continued. Despite this fact, they maintained a broad smile on their face. In the eyes of the people of Lihazeta, they looked beautiful.

“Oh my. The holy priestess is with them. They really look great together.”

“Did you hear the news? Two heroes received the blessing. That is quite convenient...”

“I wonder what the gods are painting. I shouldn’t be having such thoughts, but I’m a bit curious as to how the war with the Demon King’s army will progress.”

“You rascal. You shouldn’t even speculate about such things.”

It seemed the people of this country had read the ‘Words That Shouldn’t Be Spoken

Unless You Want to Become a Supporting Character in Another Person's Life Volume 2.' The nearby civilians were talking about their perception of the proceeding, and they were mixing in some dialogue about the future. It truly were words befitting extras!

"Hero-nim, the parade will come to an end soon. When it ends, we'll enter a location that is inaccessible by the other priests and holy knights. The two hero-nim will be accompanied only by me."

"Yes, all right."

The proceeding was really long and drawn out. When the holy priestess whispered to him, he schooled his expression. He tried his best to act as if nothing was wrong. However, there were a lot of thoughts going through his head.

'If the same situation from my past life occurs again, it'll become really annoying. Will Silpennon be able to pull this off successfully? Of course, it isn't as if there aren't scenarios where he'll fail. Still, I want to get through this cleanly. I want to change the direction of the events to completely fuck over the Demon King's army...'

He took a peek at the holy priestess. Her expression still contained some of the dismay she was feeling. However, she was a priestess blessed by the gods. This was why she had on a saintly smile on her face. Maetel was still in her self-restraint mode, so she couldn't poke at Artpe's thigh like usual.

At that moment, the holy priestess suddenly spoke.

"The two of you look very close... I am envious."

"You should find a good man for yourself."

At Artpe's apathetic response, the holy priestess let out a bitter laugh as she replied.

"My body was dedicated to the gods. That is why I am unavailable to men. That is how it is. However, if the god do allow a mate for me, it would probably be a her....."

"People of Lihazeta! Please give your blessing to the two heroes and the holy priestess! They will be going on a journey to defeat the Demon King!"

Before the holy priestess could finish her words, a holy knight shouted out his words. The people of Lihazeta shouted their blessings towards the party at the same time.

There were people that had followed the parade from the start to the end. The people gathered at the current location numbered in the tens of thousands. Of course, Artpe couldn't hear the holy priestess' words.

'What? So that's what it was?'

However, Artpe didn't have a screw loose like the main characters that appeared in the hero's tale. He possessed abilities that was completely different from them. It didn't matter that the civilians were yelling at him. It didn't matter that Maetel was glaring at him. He could clearly read the lips of the holy priestess!

'The holy priestess can't meet men aside from the hero? This bitch actually believed in such lie!'

Artpe gained an understanding. He understood why the holy priestess had acted like a psychotic bitch in his previous life. He also realized why she had tried to intentionally exclude Maetel from the blessing.

The holy priestess in his past life had believed in a lie, and she had lost control as she continued to work towards her goal of a marriage!

# Chapter 112

## Stagnant Water Puddle (5)

‘Hah. Should I kill her or not...’

Artpe always thought about his previous life as his previous life, and he thought about his current life as his current life. In his past life, Artpe was one of the Four Heavenly Kings in the Demon King’s army, but that was history to him. There was no guarantee that what happened in his past life would occur in his present life.

In his past life, Silpennon had put a dagger through Artpe’s heart, yet he had a decent relationship with Silpennon in his current life. If he had kept his personal grudge about his past life, Silpennon wouldn’t have grown to be a thief that was over level 200. Artpe would have buried him in the mountains of Diaz. Silpennon would have slept the eternal sleep.

“Hah.....”

“Hero-nim, why are you looking at me like that? Ah ah. Perhaps...”

However, he was faced with the holy priestess right now, and she was truly happy when he showed interest in her. Should he really treat her in the same way as Silpennon? Should he do this despite the fact that she was a psychotic bitch, who had turned herself into a Demon in an attempt to get with a man?

When he sussed out the whole situation, this woman looked scarier to him. If there was some monumental reason behind her actions, it would have been understandable. However, she had caused trouble that was based 100% on blind love!

“No, it is nothing. I just have something I want to tell you.”

“I still have hope! Aht. Ah. It is nothing.”

She wasn’t that old, yet the holy priestess Vadinet was thinking about marriage. Artpe was truly perplexed by it. In fact, he wondered if she would believe his words even if he told her the truth.

‘Will it be possible to rehabilitate her..... ’

This wasn't a problem about cause and effect. This problem was entirely rooted in her personality. Even if he brought her in as a party member after averting the disaster, the inherent unstable factor remained. This was the reason why Artpe was worried. He could see the possible desire and lack of control hidden behind her smile!

If the reason for her corruption really stemmed from 'men', he would be able to solve the problem. It might be possible for him to eliminate any discord. He could turn this woman over to Silpennon. He just had to make her accept the fact that the holy priestess didn't have to have relationship with the hero! It was all bullshit!

‘That's right. If I can cleanly hand her over to Silpennon... ’

This was his last problem.

In his past life, Silpennon loved Maetel. The current Silpennon was... Artpe had no idea. Silpennon probably held a lot of interest towards Maetel. Artpe couldn't forget the fact that the young Silpennon had fallen for Maetel at first sight.

‘However, I immediately separated the two of them. Moreover, Silpennon is dependent on me in terms of materialistic and emotional support. This is why he'll take a step back. The only problem that still remains is the fact that I didn't know if he'll accept the holy priestess..... ’

Oh well! Since Silpennon will become a king of a nation, he could probably take in a wife or two! Since Silpennon didn't know about the disaster caused by Vadinet in their past lives, he would see Vadinet as a beautiful girl. He might become interested in her innocent charm. There was a chance that Silpennon might like her!

“Heeng. Artpehhhhh.”

“Ah. She really needs a lot of work.”

“.....ooh-doohk.”

Afterwards, the party satisfactorily ended the parade. They entered into the Zero Class area. In that moment, Artpe did something he had assured Silpennon he could do. He created a byway that would allow Silpennon to enter into the Zero Class!

“There is something more important you have to steal, Silpennon! Please do well!”

Artpe didn’t even blink as he passed on the bothersome task to Silpennon.

The party had arrived at the Zero Class area very late. This was why the meeting with the pope was pushed to the next day. They were guided to their accommodations. There were no priests or disciples in this facility. The holy priestess, Artpe and Maetel were the only ones walking down the silent hallway.

“In truth, it isn’t as if we don’t have those that wait on us. However, they are only allowed in at times that wouldn’t interfere with the lives of the high rank priests. Everyone that works in this region are chosen from the daughters of the high rank priests. They were handpicked and trained.”

“They volunteered themselves for such a troublesome role. They are very devout to the gods.”

“Everyone wants to lift the name of the gods, and we are all doing it for the heroes. I’m sure all of them will be thrilled to know that hero-nim will be residing here.”

They stopped walking down the hallway when they reached a small wooden door. There was a carefully made oval door plate placed on the door. There was the word, ‘Yes’, written in red letters. He didn’t ask what the ‘Yes’ was referring to.

“This is my room.”

“Yes. I already know that.”

“It seems you knew this in advance. Oh my...”

The holy priestess was making a big deal out of nothing, yet she looked happy. In some ways, she looked similar to Maetel at that moment.

Mmmm.

It was actually a discourtesy towards Maetel for him to make such a comparison, so he dropped the thought.

“This place is Artpe-nim’s room. Maetel-nim just has to go down a little bit more for her room.”

Artpe's room was very close to Vadinet's room. They looked towards Maetel's room. However, the distance to Maetel's room wasn't small at all. The layout of the rooms were too transparent in its intention!

Artpe had a feeling as to who had a hand in assigning the rooms. Maetel had been very patient, because she had sinned against Artpe. However, she was slowly reaching a boiling point.

"Artpe will sleep with me."

She could no longer hold herself back. In the end, Maetel opened her mouth. Vadinet giggled as she gave a retort,

"It might have been possible when both of you were younger, but you can't do that now. Maetel-nim's room is over there..."

"Me."

Maetel put on a soft smile as she tugged Artpe's arm towards her. She clung tight to his arm.

"Artpe will sleep with me..."

"....."

Vadinet and Maetel fought fiercely with their eyes. However, in the middle of the battle, Artpe flicked Maetel on her forehead.

"Ah-yaht!"

"This dork's thought level is that of a child, Vadinet. We really are just sleeping in the same room, so please don't have weirds thoughts about us."

"W... weird thoughts! I'm not called the holy priestess for nothing. I just didn't want something profane happening between minors. Moreover, hero-nim is....."

"That is why you can rest easy. I'm going to Maetel's room. I'll see you in the morning."

"Ooh-ah-ah-ooh."

Vadinet was making strange noises.

It was urgent for him to get Silpennon!

If things continued along this path, Artpe might really get eaten by this woman. As he had such thoughts, he quickly dragged Maetel towards her room. He opened the door. They entered through the door and he locked the door. He was barely able to relax after doing all of this.

“Huh-uhk, huh-uhk... I’ve never experienced a woman so young throw herself at me with such thirst.”

“Wow, Artpe. Look at my room.”

“Huh? Ah..... I see. It’s pretty.”

He had worried that Vadinet had done something weird to Maetel’s room. Fortunately, this room wasn’t under the domain of Vadinet. The room was very clean, and it was beautifully decorated. The room possessed a large and soft bed. It was a luxury that Maetel had never experienced before.

“The blanket is very cozy! Let’s quickly wash then sleep!”

“Yes, let’s do that. You should wash first”

“Let’s wash togeth-ahhkh.”

Maetel was quite awkward as she attempted to seduce Artpe. She received a flick on her forehead, and she was chased into the bathroom.

“Hoo-oo. Shall I do this now?”

He was barely able to find a calmness in his surrounding. First, he sat on the chair placed in front of the dressing table. He was thorough in checking for surveillance and interference type magic spells. Then he placed a sound dampening barrier and anti-intrusion spell around him. He finally took out the communication device.

“Silpennon.”

[Hey, I really was able to sneak in. What did you do? It was as if the barrier was waiting



for me. A very small region of the barrier opened for me. Of course, Leseti and Deyus are moving separately from me.]

As expected, Silpennon had significant talent for this type of work. Artpe had a satisfied smile on his face as he gave his next order.

“I’ll tell you the location of our lodgings. My room is empty, so you should use that one.”

[Won’t I be find out?]

“With your skills, you won’t be caught by the servants. Even if you are found, it is just one person... In truth, it would be great if you were found out by her.”

[What did you just say?]

Artpe spoke with a very serious voice.

“Would you like to seduce a particular woman for the sake of saving a country?”

[.....are you perhaps thinking about letting go of Maetel?]

“I won’t give let you have Maetel, you idiot.”

He had unintentionally spat out some embarrassing words. He was very nervous about the fact that Maetel might have heard his voice from the bathroom. Fortunately, there was no reaction.

This was all thanks to Silpennon, who had spoke such idiotic words! He had taken on the occupation of thief, and now he spoke like a worthless thief that worked in a back alley!

[Ah. Then what are you talking about!]

“There is a very beautiful holy priestess named Vadinet here.”

[If she is a very beautiful holy priestess, why don’t you seduce her?]

“She doesn’t get along with Maetel. If I seduced her, there will be a war. Moreover, that woman doesn’t really like me.”

He was telling the truth. From the moment she saw him, she had tried to look appealing to Artpe. However, she was doing this, because she believed that she had to be matched up with a hero. That was the only reason. She didn't have any special emotions towards him. At the very least, it looked like that from Artpe's perspective.

Moreover, she had been in love with Silpennon in their past lives. There was a clear difference. If Vadiant had the choice of choosing her love interest between the two of them, she would most definitely choose Silpennon!

[Still, I'm having a hard time trusting you...]

"You are the only one, Silpennon. This woman is directly involved with the corrupted faction within the temple. We have to either root them out or this whole country will rot. This all hinges on that woman."

[Eh-eeeeee. This is supposed to be a holy nation! Why are they like this!]

That was what Artpe wanted to say too. Silpennon anguished over it before he decided Artpe was telling the truth. In the end, he nodded his head.

[I'll look into it first. I'll be taking on the role of an intruder, so I have no idea how I'll seduce her...]

"I'll create a manual for you. You can relax and seduce her!"

[If I meet you again, I want to strike you full in the face.]

"Let's talk again after we meet. Ah. Of course, you have to make sure to steal everything else."

[You are working me really hard. I'm ending the call. I have to move now.]

"All right. You should contact me after you infiltrate my room. I'll bring my manual to you."

[Quit it, you asshole!]

Artpe ended the call with Silpennon, then he took out a pen and paper. He wondered if he should go this far in doing this, but he decided to temporarily suspend such thoughts. He knew Vadiant's personality and Silpennon's abilities. Artpe would use his

power to create a manual that'll work 100% on her!

"Artpe, I'm done washing."

"Ah..... Mmmm."

Maetel opened the door to bathroom. She came out when Artpe was focused on making the manual.

"This place has better facilities than Aedia."

"All waste is purified using holy magic... Anyways, you should put on some clothes."

"Yes!"

Maetel was covering her body with a bath towel. It was a wonder that she was able to pull it off at such an age, but she couldn't hide the luscious line of her body. Moreover, her cheeks were flushed right now, and it accentuated her allure. Even Artpe was affected by her dizzying sensual charm, so he desperately turned his gaze away.

"Now that I think about it, it has been awhile since only the two of us slept together, right?"

"I guess so. I'm going to go wash."

"All right! Ah. You know what, Artpe?"

Maetel asked her question in a nonchalant manner.

"Artpe said my mind is child-like?"

".....w... what about it?"

"You said we are just going to sleep. Does that mean we can do something other than sleeping?"

"....."

In that moment, Artpe encountered the biggest crisis of his life.

“Also, Vadinet talked about something profane happening between a man and a woman. What was she talking about? Huh?”

“T... that is... You’ll find out once you are an adult.”

“I’m not an adult yet?”

As she asked the question, Maetel looked down as she tried to check her own body. Artpe suddenly stood up, and he quickly walked towards the bathroom. As he did so, he made a request towards Maetel.

“Be patient, Maetel. Don’t pull off your towel right now. You should get into your pajamas while I go into the bathroom. All right?”

“Artpehhhh~ Please tell me about it. Huh? Huh?”

“It is too early! I’ll tell you when you become an adult!”

“When will I become an adult! Huh?”

Before Maetel could chase after him, Artpe desperately closed the door to the bathroom. Cold sweat appeared on his back.

‘This is a problem.’

It was said that the enemy within was the scariest. Those words described his situation to a T. Currently, Maetel was the scariest! She was scarier than the Demon King’s army and Vadinet!

“Artpe, you’ll tell me when you come out? Huh?”

“You should sleep first!”

“You are too much!”

Artpe was tormented. He wondered how he would convince Maetel to sleep with him without ‘sleeping’ with him.

On that night, Artpe was fortunate. Maetel kept pressing him for answers, but he was successful in putting her to sleep first.

Also, Silpennon was successful in infiltrating into Artpe's quarters without being caught.

# Chapter 113

## Stagnant Water Puddle (6)

‘I can’t believe he is acting so outrageous in a joint mission.’

He had left behind Leseti and Deyus. He allowed them to move independently. Afterwards, he infiltrated the Zero Class area. He continued to grumble as he moved from one shadow to another.

As he approached level 220, he continued to train as a thief. He was able to sense all life and Mana within a limited region. He also learned how to avoid detection of others. It was as Artpe had said. He possessed genius level talent towards thief-related abilities.

‘He trusted in my abilities, and that is why he supported me. Did he do all of this, because he knew this day would come...’

When he thought about it, it was very suspicious. Silpennon frowned. Even as his mind struggled over this problem, there was no adverse effects to the body. He continued to move quickly as he avoided the Mana Net that filled the whole area. He was able to easily get past the traps as he approached Artpe’s lodging.

‘I should head over to the room he told me about.’

He had received maps with locations of Dungeons from Artpe. As he methodically cleared the Dungeons, he was able to train his thief skills for two years. He had a basic plan of action on how he should act in an unknown territory.

We wasn’t a warrior that was wearing an invincible armor. He wasn’t a magician that possessed powerful magic. If he was asked to fight enemies head on or destroy a building in its entirety, it was beyond his ability.

It didn’t matter if it was a Dungeon or a ruin. He infiltrated them first to make sure that his safety was assured.

He slowly crawled through a region like a spider as he expanded his knowledge of a

region. When he gathered all the information, he seized his target. He did this last. It allowed him to cleanly escape after acquiring his target. This was Silpennon's mindset as a thief.

'There really is a damn fine mesh of magical energy interwoven in this place. It would have taken me a long time to analyze this place. How did Artpe manage to twist the structure of this place?'

He used his quick feet to safely avoid several secret traps, and he was able to enter into the residential area. He was able to read the signature of the people moving within. He moved quickly and stealthily as he avoided coming across them. He reached the room pointed out by Artpe.

No. In truth, there was another room that worried him before he reached Artpe's room.

'I don't know why that room has a Yes sign on the door, but I feel an incredible amount of Mana within.'

Did he perhaps need to seduce the person within the room? Did he have to do it for the prosperity of Paladia and the advancement of the hero's party? If so, he could accept doing such a task. Since she was this talented, he could understand why she wanted to enter into the hero's party using whatever method within her means. The only problem was the fact that he had to seduce her.

'I'm sure her appearance is perfect, but her personality is probably terrible. That bastard, Artpe. He keeps an angel like Maetel by his side, yet he wants me to... Ah ah ah. I don't care. I want to rest first.'

Silpennon let out a sigh as he grabbed the door to the room. He used a specialized thief skill called 'Quiet Infiltration. He disabled the alarm and observation type magic as he picked the lock. He opened the door. He was able to do everything without making a sound...

There was one girl inside.

"Uh....."

"Ah....."

Both of them were at a loss for words at the unexpected situation. She wore a headpiece and a plain apron. She wore loose one piece dress that was comfortable to move in. No matter how he saw it, she had the appearance of a servant. A thought came to him as he looked at the girl.

‘With your skills, you won’t be discovered by the servants.’

Ah ah. That’s right. Artpe clearly said those words, yet Silpenon let Artpe’s words go in one ear and out the other. Silpenon had every reason to be ashamed.

He really didn’t expect to be found out by a maid!

“W... who... who are you?”

He wore a sword strapped to his body. He also wore a tight black suit, and a black hood covering his face. Silpenon looked entirely suspicious. The maid looked ready to cry as she asked her question. She had assumed he would kill her if she let out a scream. That was why she was keeping her voice low, and he was thankful for it.

“First..... I’m not a bad person.”

“Liar!”

Silpenon spoke as he closed the door. He acted as if nothing was wrong. The maid loudly refuted his words. Silpenon let out a bitter laugh.

“If you follow my words, you won’t die. I’ll try to find a happy outcome for the both of us.”

“Hoo-hoohk. How were you able to enter into the Zero Class? I was expecting to meet the hero-nim. Instead I met a thief...”

Silpenon wondered if he should tell her that he was able to come into this place thanks to the hero. However, he decided to hold that information back for now. First, he closed the window, then he looked at the girl as he sat on the bed.

“Hmmm.....”

“Hee, heek.”



She looked plain, but she wasn't a pumpkin. She actually had clean and bright skin. Her eyes were large and clear. If she was made-up, she would look quite pretty.

However, her appearance wasn't what was important right now... It was the fact that her presence was very faint.

"How come you weren't detected by my senses? I was sure this room was empty."

"It started from when I was young... I heard similar words about me from others. That is why my father said I was suited to become a maid in the Zero Class....."

"It isn't just faint. I think it's an ability."

"I was able to meet a thief thanks to this ability. Hoo-eeeeeeee."

It seemed the girl was overwhelmed by her fear, so she finally started to cry. Did this girl really think he was going to kill her? It seemed she had an innocent personality befitting a maid of Paladia. A smile came unbidden to his mouth.

"Stop crying. I won't kill you."

"Hoo-ggoo-oooh. Really?"

"Yes, I won't if you heed my words."

The thoughts within Silpennon's head became complicated, since his plans were starting to go sideways. Still, he wasn't someone that would kill a person to uncomplicate a situation.

Anyways, Silpennon had planned on resting in this room for a little bit. He was going to recover his Mana as he checked what was going on nearby. Instead, he decided to cajole information out of her.

"You should let go of your cleaning supplies for now."

"The hero-nim might enter this room at any moment, so I have to clean it..."

"Let it go."

"Yes, sir."

The maid quickly let go of her cleaning supply, and she approached him. When he made sure no one else was approaching Silpennon's domain, he took off his hood. He revealed his face. If he wanted to communicate with her, he would have to get rid of attire that was causing the fear within her.

"Ah....."

"What? Are you surprised, because I'm too young?"

"That... Yes."

Silpennon possessed red hair and burning red eyes. His appearance spoke of his nobility. He couldn't reach the growth speed of Artpe and Maetel, but he was 15 years old. He wasn't a boy, but a young man. He had grown that much.

The unknown thief suddenly changed into a dignified and handsome young man. The maid couldn't help, but feel less threatened by him. When he saw that the maid had relaxed a little bit, he became relieved. He asked her a question.

"What is your name?"

"My name is... Aria Kuar Serieta."

"Kuar? Serieta? What the hell? Are you a disciple studying under a high rank priest?"

"The servants of the Zero Class are made up of those that have the potential to become high rank disciples..."

He had acquired a very surprising yet useless information! Silpennon nodded his head as he continued to speak.

"All right, Aria. My name is Silpennon. I came here, because I want something from this place. If you cooperate with me, my work will become easier, and your life will remain safe. It will also help out Paldia."

"Liar. Aren't you a thief? You probably came here to steal Paladia's precious holy relics... ooh-mmm..."

She thought Silpennon was being shameless as he continued to lie. She thoughtlessly undercut his words. However, she suddenly remembered what kind of situation she

was in, so she shut her own mouth. However, Silpennon didn't show any signs of anger. She was careful as she opened her mouth again.

"I'm the daughter of a priest. I can pretend that you aren't here, but I cannot cooperate with any actions that would hurt the people of Paladia. I also cannot help you steal any of our relics."

"You will do so even if the consequence of your actions will result in your death?"

".....yes."

He saw a pretty resolute expression on her face. He hadn't seen the sign of her backbone when she had been cowering in fear. When Silpennon saw this...

"In truth, I am here at the request of the hero."

"Is that really true!?"

He thought it was truly easy to use the name of the hero.

"Just think about it. I came here on the day when the heroes entered into the Zero Class. No matter how you look at it, doesn't it look intentionally done? Moreover, I immediately came to the hero Artpe's room. If I didn't have foreknowledge of this place, it would be impossible for me to do this."

"N... now that I think about it... However, why would he do that? Why would the hero-nim need to hire a thief..."

"If you wait a little, I can give you proof. I want you to listen to me closely. This is the important part, Aria."

He had just met her, yet he took the liberties of calling her by her name.

"This generation's heroes had refused the summons from their kingdom before. Moreover, they took a very roundabout path to get to the temple. You know this, right?"

"I... is that so? Not much outside information comes into the Zero Class... H... however, I do know that the hero-nims took an unusually long time to come to the temple after they were discovered... They had to cancel the planned event several times within the Zero Class....."

A small smile appeared on Silpennon's lips. She looked like a maid, but in the end, she was a lady that had been cultivated within a greenhouse. He just had to mix 10% lie with 90% truth. She was merely a prey that could be tricked.

He was also a prince that was cultivated within a greenhouse. It hadn't been too long since he had put behind such an environment, yet he thought in such arrogant terms.

"The hero know that there is corruption within the temple. Please don't be surprised by what I'm about to tell you. Currently, the temple is conspiring with the Demon King's army."

"What!? Oohp oohp."

She unconsciously spoke very loudly. Her voice rang out within the room. He desperately covered her mouth with his hand. At the touch of this strange man, her face became beet red. It was as if her face was about to explode.

"Are you going to be quiet and listen to me?"

"Ooooooh-bbbbbp."

"Good."

Silpennon let her go, and he quickly gave her an explanation. He bulldozed over her confused mind!

"That is why the heroes didn't come here until they made all their preparations. Only after acquiring me as a comrade, they narrowly decided to come here. This was all possible, because of my presence."

"How can that be..... You are a thief!?"

"The hero's party directly entered into the Zero Class to draw the attention of the priests. While they are doing so, I have to search for evidence that would expose the corruption within the temple. I have to expose their 'righteousness' to be false. I am cooperating with the heroes to purify the temple. That is our final goal."

"My god....."

It was truly funny. Silpennon was spouting words that was coming to his mind, but

most of his words were true! Moreover, Aria was a naive maiden. At his dramatic words, she accepted his words at a logical and emotional level.

‘This truly sounds like something that occurs within the hero’s tale!’

This was the thought going through her head! It was expected. Paladia were filled with women that like to have their heads in the clouds!

“I’m sure you’ve observed select high rank priests or the pope show strange behaviors. They probably tried to hide something within the Zero Class. I’m sure of it.”

“However, these are holy relics important to the rituals of our religions. Of course, they would try to hide such holy relics...”

“Yes, that is a good cover for their actions, but the evidence of their wrongdoing will come out soon. I’ll find it.”

“B... but...”

“Just think about it, Aria. This is the duty of the heroes. The temple always stays rooted to this place, but the two heroes travel around the continent defeating evil. They carry out good in this world. Who’s more trustworthy between the two? Do you even have to think about it?”

“T... that is...”

She had believed and followed the temple for her entire life. However, she also had absolute worship towards the heroes. As a naive girl, it seemed believing in the heroes had a little bit more appeal. The girl was taken aback as she stammered. In the end, she shook her head.

“It is plausible that you came here on the behest of the hero-nim. I can believe it. There is no need for you to give such a lie. However, my life and body was entrusted towards serving the temple. I cannot easily change my heart in this matter.”

“Tsk.”

The girl’s golden eyes twinkled. Silpennon wondered why things weren’t working out so easily for him as he clicked his tongue. However, the words that came out her mouth next were sensational.

“.....not yet. That is why I want you to show me proof. I want you to show me proof that the temple has become corrupted!”

“Huh?”

“I was cleaning the hallway not too long ago. I saw the pope quickly rush past me, and I saw him enter into a secret tunnel. In truth, I thought his actions were a bit suspicious... If it is you, you can show me what is in that tunnel. I’m sure we can get a definite answer to all of this!”

She was already determined to join forces with Silpennon!

# Chapter 114

## Mission Impossible (1)

Silpennon was looking at her with a baffled expression on his face. She gave a detailed explanation of her reasoning.

“My sense of presence has always been weak. Even after I joined this place, people aren’t able to perceive me very well.”

“At this point, it doesn’t sound like your sense of presence is weak. I can come up with another adjective that would describe your ability.”

Aria cheerfully ignored the very normal retort to her words. She continued to speak.

“That is why the pope... Occasionally, the other high priests performed important tasks in my presence. They didn’t realize I was near.”

“You saw something suspicious. So why did you do nothing about it?”

“I’m only a maid. I have no power. The only thing I can do is put my faith in the pope, and in addition, the priests.”

It was bullshit to say that she didn’t have any power. She possessed a stealth ability that was capable of deceiving even the pope. How can she be so shameless by speaking such words! Silpennon was flabbergasted. However, Aria was on a roll, so he didn’t stop her from speaking. He just stood still.

“However, when I heard your story today, I came to a decision that I can no longer stand by doing nothing. When I think back on it, the pope had a really odd expression on his face. It was as if he was mesmerized... If I’m to be blunt, he looked like a perverted old man.”

He thought she was being way too blunt.

“So you do think that old man is doing something unseemly.”

“Yes..... I cannot confirm it for myself, but it will be possible for you to do so.”

Silpennon had the ability to infiltrate into the Zero Class! Her eyes contained great expectation as her gaze washed over him. He became a little bit cocky. Up until now, he had been caught up in his need to growing faster. This was why it felt pretty good to receive recognition from someone else.

“All right. I want you to guide me to the secret tunnel.”

“D... do I have to go too?”

“You’ll only believe it if you see it with your own eyes?”

“That is... Yes. It is so. What about the hero-nim?”

“Ah. That’s right. I’ll have to contact Artpe first...”

In the middle of his speech, Silpennon suddenly disappeared from Aria’s sight. It had occurred so fast that she stood in place as she blinked her eyes.

“Ah?”

“.....mmm.”

Afterwards, the door opened and someone came in. It was none other than the holy priestess Vadinet!

She came into the room, then she tilted her head in puzzlement.

“That’s strange. I definitely heard a voice in here... It was the voice of a young man, so I thought it was the hero-nim.”

“Ah. Holy priestess-nim...”

“He isn’t here. I guess I misheard.”

Of course, Aria was ignored by Vadinet. It seemed she hadn’t been discovered by Vadinet. It was to be expected. Silpennon had grown as a thief, yet he was only able to register Aria after he had opened the door.



“Ha-ah, hero-nim. He was as I had imagined. He’s a wonderful person. He isn’t exactly my ideal type, but... That fact makes me like him even more...”

The holy priestess slowly entered into the room, and she sat on top of the bed. Aria was frozen like an ice sculpture as she looked on. The holy priestess’ actions steadily escalated, and it became quite the spectacle. She fell onto the bed as she started to grope the blanket.

“Hoo-oooh... I want to see him up close. Will he come to this room tomorrow? If that meddling woman wasn’t here, everything would have been perfect...”

“.....”

It was clear as to who the meddling woman was! They had been trying to expose the pope’s true nature, yet they were faced with the holy priestess’ true nature! When faced with this reality, Aria didn’t know what to do. She looked like she was about to cry.

“The blessing was supposed to be given only to Arpte-nim. I wonder why it turned out like that... I’m sure that witch used some weird trick. The position of hero is only for Artpe-nim, yet she is sharing that spot with him. I’m sure she used similar methods in the past to steal his power. Yes, that’s it. That’s the only explanation that makes sense.”

There was murderous intent dripping from her voice. It would be much more dangerous than before if Aria’s presence was found out! Aria desperately tried to use her skill that allowed her to assimilate into her nature environment. While she was doing that, the holy priestess finally spoke the worst possible words that she could come out of her mouth.

“If that woman disappears, hero-nim will only look at me.”

The holy priestess’ face was filled with desire and jealousy. It was an expression that shouldn’t be made by a woman called the holy priestess.

“That woman is evil. She is an evil woman that is getting in between the hero-nim and me... How do I reveal that bitch’s true nature? How? How...”

She rolled around the bed as she brainstormed. In the end, she couldn’t come up with an answer. She had a preoccupied expression on her face as she exited the room. Of course, it was enough for the two in the room to make an assessment of the holy

priestess.

She was quite rotten.

“Ah, ah-oooh. Even the holy priestess...”

Aria found out a truth that she hadn't wanted to know. When Aria looked like she was about to cry, Silpennon dropped to the floor. He had been hiding in the ceiling. He had a miserable expression on his face.

“Artpe..... You want me to seduce such a woman...!”

“S... seduce?”

“It was one of the requests given to me by the hero. However...”

He was supposed to seduce the woman. After procuring her as an ally, Silpennon had planned on exposing the corruption that was being propagated by the pope and his faction. It would have been revealed in glorious fashion. He was going to do this with her. His story would have unfolded dramatically starting tonight... That was the plan. However, he unexpectedly met a collaborator in Aria, and he had set out on a different route.

Moreover, he was late in finding out the true nature of the holy priestess. She was a bit...

“Nope. It isn't just a little bit. She is completely trash.”

“The holy priestess always smiles at us as she gives us blessings. She is a good person... So why is she acting like that?”

“She didn't hesitate to label Maetel as being evil. It is actually impressive. I never knew a human could become so twisted.”

“A... are you... going to seduce her?”

Aria carefully asked him the question. Silpennon let out a kind laughter as he shook his head from side to side.

“No, I have no interest in seducing a woman that is hell bent on having a different man.

Moreover, she has such a dirty and ill-tempered personality. I'd rather die than seduce her."

"That's great... Aht."

After hearing his words, Aria blurted out something odd. Aria quickly shut her mouth. Silpennon was too busy cursing Artpe inside that he didn't hear her words.

'As expected, she's a bomb! Her appearance is perfect, but everything else is all messed up. Why would I seduce her? On top of that, he wants me to seduce someone that is clinging to him. Does he plan on humiliating me?'

It was the moment when Artpe's Pass on the Bomb plan failed! Silpennon kept swearing as he picked up his communication device. He tried to contact Artpe. Artpe immediately answered the call.

[Are there any spells being used near you?]

"I checked using the Artifact. There is none."

[Is anyone there?]

"There is another person with me."

[I see. All right. I'll go there right now, and I'm going to kill you.]

"Relax. She's an ally."

[.....I want you to keep the person you call an ally in place. I'll be there.]

"What about Maetel?"

[I was barely able to put her to sleep. Oooh ooh ooh.]

The mere fact that Artpe could sleep with Maetel made Silpennon feel envious. Artpe should be in heaven, yet he was acting as if it was a terrifying experience. Silpennon couldn't understand what was so bad about it, but Artpe ended the call. Artpe didn't elaborate on the subject. Aria stood next to him, and her eyes were twinkling.

"That really was the hero-nim!?"

“I thought you said you believed me. Were you worried?”

“It is like hearing a description of the 5 Great Dishes of the world and eating them yourself. It is a completely different experience!”

“Those weren’t that tasty. I thought the buttered corn on the cob was tastier.”

“What.....? You ate the 5 Great Dishes...?”

How long had passed since the two of them struck up a conversation that sounded a little bit out of place? The door opened, and a young man possessing black hair and bewitching purple eyes entered into the room. It was Artpe.

“It has been a while, Silpennon.”

“Kek, Artpe. You are bigger than me? I thought you would have become frail...”

It had been 2 years since he met Artpe. Silpennon grinded his teeth as he sighed in grief.

He had fallen behind in terms of level, but Silpennon believed that he would be able to overwhelm Artpe in terms of height and body build. Artpe had completely taken the route of a magician, yet he possessed a sturdy build. Moreover, he had grown into a young man that was handsome and tall!

“Of course, I’m big. I’m the hero. Aren’t you a little bit too skinny?”

“Of course, I’m skinny. I’m a thief! Shit!”

This was something Silpennon had recognized when they were young, but as a 15 year old, Artpe looked really handsome. His appearance had been upgraded by two steps. He possessed good looks that could be called bewitching! It automatically made Silpennon deflate!

“Wa-ahhhh. It really is the hero-nim! He’s wonderful.....”

“Huh?”

On the other hand, Artpe treated the reunion with Silpennon as if it was no big deal. Artpe was about to close the door when he paused. He had discovered Aria, who was

shouting with joy at the sight of him.

He couldn't help but chuckle.

"I see. Someone like you exists within the temple."

"Did you find out something about her on first sight?"

"Well, yeah."

Artpe's eyes took in the young maid, who possessed an endlessly large and clear eyes.

She was the daughter of a high rank priest, yet she was working as a maid. That part was a bit unusual, but aside from that fact, she was a very normal maid. She was from the human race, and her level was 3.

On the other hand, there were two characteristics that made her abnormal.

[Aria Kuar Serieta]

[Human Girl 14 Years Old]

[Level : 3]

[Innate Ability : Assimilation]

The first thing of note was the fact that she didn't have a Class. Secondly, she was only a level 3, 14 year old girl, yet she had already awakened to her Innate Ability.

"Hello, Aria. Why don't you have a Class?"

She was flustered by Artpe's question, but she obediently gave him an answer.

"T... the maids that work within the Zero Class aren't given a Class. After finishing 5 years of volunteer service, we gain recognition, and we are blessed for the first time. Then we begin the course to become an elite priestess... That is what my father told me."

"I'm surprised that they are so picky!"

Artpe totally ignored Silpennon, who had become surprised by the information.

“That is why they didn’t know about your potential. You have an Innate ability called Assimilation. You are assimilating with a part of your surrounding even as we speak. The effect of this ability just makes others not take notice of you. However, your ability has the possibility to grow into something amazing.”

“I have an Innate ability.....!?”

“That’s right. It is very important for you to fully grasp what your ability is. The more you have an understanding of your Innate ability, you can draw out the potential that is nestled within you. Your Innate ability will become powerful. You should take this to heart.”

“Assimilation...”

“No wonder.”

She was level 3, and she didn’t possess any skills. However, she was able to fool the holy priestess and the pope. The only possible explanation was an Innate ability. Silpennon nodded his head as if he had already accepted it as fact. Artpe also nodded his head as he spoke.

“Yes, this girl has an Innate ability, which is something you don’t have.”

“You are a hero that possess a true gift for annoying other people.”

“Aren’t I great?”

“Shut up.”

While Silpennon and Artpe conversed, Aria kept mumbling, ‘Innate ability’, repeatedly to herself. If she had to pick what had been the biggest surprise for her today, it would be the realization that she possessed an Innate ability.

‘I became one of the Four Heavenly King using an Innate ability. Maetel awakened to her Innate ability after she became a hero. Then there is Sherryl. After a lot of fuss, she was able to become the Genesis Mermaid Queen, and she acquired an Innate ability. Such a rare talent is working here as a maid...’

It was an extraordinary coincidence. No, it might be fate if one looked at it in a certain way. If she didn't have her Assimilation ability, her meeting with Silpennon wouldn't have occurred.

'All right. Things have gone off the rails a little bit, but if I think about her potential, my eventual profit might be quite lucrative.'

Artpe grinned as he verified something with her.

"You said you wanted help with our work?"

"It isn't like that, Artpe. She wants to see positive proof before..."

"Yes, hero-nim! If you will have me, I will help you as much as you want!"

"Hey!"

Her words had changed! It hadn't been long since she had met the hero, but Aria had already developed an endless trust for the hero. There was no hesitation within her.

"Please follow me. I'll guide you to what I consider to be the most suspicious location."

"Ah ah ah. I can't accept it!"

"You are being noisy, dude. Let's hurry up and go."

While everyone was asleep, the hero, the thief and the maid started exploring the Zero Class. The makeup of the party was quite odd.

# Chapter 115

## Mission Impossible (2)

Artpe followed Aria as they walked down the hallway. He came to a stop before she did. His eyes were emitting an iridescent light.

“Ah, it’s here. Right?”

“You are correct. Huh? You knew it before I told you...”

“I also possess an Innate ability.”

He grinned as he gave her an explanation. First, he checked his surrounding. The pope and the other big fishes were asleep. The holy priestess wasn’t asleep yet, but she wasn’t coming out of her room. Unless there was another weirdo like Aria amongst the maids, they wouldn’t be a problem either.

“All right. There should be no problem now.”

“Ah. You won’t be able to open up the pathway without engaging a special mechanism.”

Artpe was going to tell her that it wouldn’t be a problem. However, he stopped himself before he gave that answer. He turned to check with Silpennon.

“Silpennon, can you open it?”

“I can, but it might take a little bit of time. ”

“All right. I’ll leave it to you...”

Of course, Artpe could see through the structure of all spells and traps using his Read All Creation ability. He would have no trouble finding out the secret to this mechanism.

However, he had went through the trouble of supporting Silpennon’s growth. Why did he do that? He wanted Silpennon to grow in his ability, so Artpe wouldn’t have to do anything!



“You thought something unpleasant right now.”

“Ha ha ha. No way.”

“Hmmp. You should step away from there. It’ll be troublesome if you always think of me as a spoiled brat.”

As expected, Silpennon’s skill was undisputed. He was able to play an active role in the hero’s party in his past life.

The identification system wasn’t something that one could solve by raising the level of one’s lock picking skill. However, Silpennon had gained many Artifacts from the Dungeons of Diaz, and he had been provided tools of his trade through Mycenae. He was able to properly send false holy energy into the mechanism, and he was able to induce an error. He used this method to loosen up the defense. He neutralized the trap, and he was successful in opening up the passageway!

“Amazing... Even the pope spent 5 minutes on that.”

“It means that there is a really complex safety lock placed here. Artpe, you should be careful. There are alot of traps within.”

“I know.”

An odd smell emanated from within the secret tunnel. If one wasn’t sensitive to Mana, it would have been hard to pick out the properties of the Mana...

[Nyaa-ahhhhhh.]

“As expected, you wake up only when you smell something tasty.”

“C... cat? Where did it come from? It’s so cute.”

[Nyaa nyaa.]

“No. I want you to wait patiently for now.”

[Nyaa-ahhhhh...]

How come she had to wait everytime she wanted something? Or was the fruit that at

the end more sweeter because of the wait? Roa quietly nestled into Artpe's arms as she had such philosophical thoughts.

Silpennon also became distracted when the cat made her appearance. However, he slapped both his cheeks before he stepped forward.

"Aria, you should be on alert too. You should only place your feet in locations where my feet has tread. Also, you should walk as upright as possible."

"Ah. Understood."

"Shit. I don't think this will end here..."

If one looked at the layout of the passageway, one could tell that it hadn't been constructed solely for the purpose of hiding items. The passageway branched out, and it was apparent that this place could be used for other activities. When Silpennon had this thought, he clicked his tongue. Moreover, his expectation wasn't too far off the mark. They arrived at a fork in the hallway.

When Silpennon hesitated for a moment, Artpe shook his head from side to side.

"It will be a bust if we head down that passageway. It is like the secret entrance we found. It is another path that leads into this place."

"I see. There are a lot of tunnels here. It is proof that more than one person uses this place."

"I like that you are quick in picking things up... You are right. I believe over half of the high rank priests are involved in this... Their number will steadily grow, and... There will come a day when everyone will be on their side."

When such a time arrives, they would no longer need to use the secret tunnels. The leading figures of Paladia, which was the Zero Class, would change hands. This had occurred in his past life.

Ah. Of course, the holy priestess stepped forward to mess everything up for them. She took their power for herself!

"Artpe, I suddenly had a thought."

Silpennon kept walking forward as he asked the question.

“What if someone enters this place while we are exploring this place?”

“We’ll see what they do.”

“What if we are found out by someone?”

“We kill that person.”

At Artpe’s unwavering answers, Silpennon gave up on questioning him. Silpennon wouldn’t put it past Artpe to go through with his words. Artpe’s eyes narrowed as he confirmed something with Silpennon. It seemed he had read something from Silpennon’s attitude.

“Are you still hesitating to act? Is it because this place is Paladia?”

“I’m not hesitating... I’m not. I just think that we can’t be sure that everyone that enters this place has bad intentions...”

“That is a valid thought. You haven’t confirmed their true nature yet...”

“What about you? Are you saying that you know everything?”

Artpe did not answer his question. Silpennon grumbled, but he had no choice. He had to move forward. Aria followed behind, and she was starting to enjoy the experience a little bit.

“We’ve arrived.”

Even if the tunnel was long, it was still within the Zero Class. It was 15 minutes after they discovered the secret passageway. They arrived at a dead end containing a small bookcase. There was a desk placed near the wall of the bookcase, but there was nothing else.

“What the hell? There’s only bookcases here.”

When he took in Artpe’s words into account, Silpennon had expected to find a Demon summoning circle. Silpennon was disappointed, so he grumbled to himself. Artpe tsked as he spoke.

“If it is a simple bookcase, do you really think they would hide it in a location that is so hard to reach?”

“However, these really are normal books. Look here. There is no sign that these books has anything to do with black magic or the worship of the Demon king...”

When he used the Thief Class’ Observation skill, he immediately made an assessment... He spoke with an attitude that said, ‘You can check it for yourself!’ However, Artpe let out a deeper sigh as a response.

“Silpennon, are you really a thief?”

“.....Ah. Wait a moment.”

Silpennon stopped Artpe, who was about to step forward.

“Wait a moment. I found it. It is so intricate that I was almost fooled...”

“That is fortunate. If you disturbed the bookcase, a spell would have gone off. I’ll leave it at that. You should take some safety measure before you start.”

“.....all right. Let’s do this.”

Silpennon took out an Artifact. It was a locket that was emitting a red light. When the cover to the locket was opened, it didn’t contain a picture. It contained an eye that was covered with an eyelid.

“Open your eyes, Observer.”

At Silpennon’s whisper, the eye opened as it let out a red light. Even if he didn’t activate it for long, the Mana consumption was quite high. However, when the light was shone on a subject, it had the power of greatly resisting against a spell being activated. This was especially true for subjects that were immobile. Basically, it was a top-grade Artifact to use against inanimate objects.

“I never knew such an Artifact existed... You must really be an amazing thief.”

“It is the Observer’s Eye. It is a good Artifact. If it is used against an object instead of a person, I can cancel spells up to level 250 without much difficulty.”

“Of course, it’s great. I acquired it from a Dungeon you told me about.”

“However, it is lacking for this task. Give it to me.”

“What?”

How many people in the human realm could maintain a spell over level 250?

Silpennon was shocked, but Artpe’s eyes were dead serious. He handed his Artifact towards Artpe.

“Hoo-oooh... Good.”

When Artpe received the Observer’s Eye from Silpennon, he used Reinforcement three times. It was such a high rank Artifact that it required a significant amount of Mana. It was a formidable amount even for Artpe.

“It is complete. This Artifact will suppress spells placed on objects. It’ll do so in most occasions.”

“You... No. Nevermind. Since you are doing this for me, I want you to use Reinforcement on all my Artifacts.”

“You really are a smart aleck.”

Artpe used Reinforcement on Silpennon’s tools, defensive gears and weapon. While Artpe was doing this, Silpennon placed the Observer’s Eye in a position where the light would shine on the bookcase. At the same time, he activated several Thief skills, and he started solving the secrets of the bookcase.

“Password..... This also requires holy power. This is annoying...”

“Aht. Clean holy power is being emitted from the silver key... No, it changed shape!?”

“It would be great if I could trace the magic. All right... Read it in my stead, Spirit Eye.”

“Another Artifact!”

The fact that he had a lot of Artifacts weren’t the surprising part. It was the fact that he understood which Artifacts he had to use in which situations. He was using multiple

Artifacts at the same time as he steadily analyzed the bookcase. Silpennon really looked like a thief that appeared in the old stories.

“Amazing.....”

Aria, who had been watching all of this, felt her heart beat faster. She really was watching the hero’s party in action! Maybe, her faith in her religion wasn’t as deep as she thought Aria had that general thought.

“This is all thanks to the power of my gifted and talented education program... take this, Silpennon. I finished Reinforcing everything.”

“You are just in time. I need that.”

It was an Artifact that looked like a plain chalk. Silpennon pulled out a book. It looked like any other book one could find in any bookcase. He opened to the first page of the book, and he started scribbling on the page with the chalk.

At a glance, it looked like a pretty useless gesture. However, the bookcase started to shake, and the light coming from the Observer’s Eye had to settle it back down. It wasn’t a useless gesture.

“What the hell? Some amazing spell must have been placed here. It is trying to resist against the Observer’s Eye, which had been Reinforced by you.....”

“I told you that already.”

“You did, but your words were about the Zero Class... ,... Ah, whatever.”

The invisible words from the chalk were absorbed, and the book started letting out a bleak light. Then it started to turn its pages by itself. The book opened itself fully when it went through about one-fourth of its pages. An elated smile appeared on Silpennon’s lips when he saw this.

“I found it.”

“Excellent.”

Artpe gave Silpennon a compliment with good grace. Of course, Artpe could have done all of this by himself from the beginning. It was a trap he could dismantle using any

book he pulled out from the bookcase. It was all thanks to his Read All Creation ability.

On the other hand, there was someone other than him in the human realm that was capable of disabling a safety mechanism of this caliber. It was a blow to the Demon King's army.

That' right.

It was obvious, but the safety mechanism placed on the bookcase wasn't done by a human. It was done by a Demon.

"In other words... There is a Demon within the Zero Class area?"

"That's right. I bet you'll be surprised when I point what which one is the Demon."

Artpe's expression and tone of voice held a mischievousness. Silpennon had been a bit mesmerized by Artpe, but in a flash, he regained his right mind. His body shook. Artpe's appearance had the power to lure even those of the same sex.

"Hmmp. If you aren't going to tell me, you should just shut up."

He tried hard to calm himself down as he focused on the book in his hands. At a glance, the content of the book looked normal.

"Yes, it's just a normal diary... Ah, it's not. It is an exchange diary."

"It means this group resides within the Zero Class, and obviously, they hold important positions within the temple. Since they cannot gather and discuss unsavory subjects out in the open, they leave words for each other."

"T... there is something written here from today. 'Two heroes have entered into the Zero Class. We need the heroes alive for the long range plan of the Demon King's army. However, do we really need both of them...?'"

Silpennon stopped reading at this point. He couldn't hide the shock from his face.

"Did I really just read the temple's exchange diary? It sounds like an observation log from the Demon king's army..."

"P... please show it to me. There is no way it says that!"

Aria couldn't contain herself, so she ran forward to snatch the book away. Her eyes read the next portion.

“Both were confirmed as being heroes. As a result of the parade, we found out that the people overwhelmingly favor the male hero. It is my assessment that there wouldn't be much of a setback if the female hero is killed or if she went missing. The Demonic god will be happy if she is used as a sacrifice... '.....”

“This is why I request permission to modify a portion of the magic circle made by our forebears. In my assessment, we will be able to summon a level 250 Demonic beast.”

Both Silpennon and Aria nodded their heads at the same time. Artpe faced them with a kindly face, and he nodded his head.

“Do you understand now?”

“Yes.....”

“There are penmanship that looks familiar to me. I'm sure it was written by a friend of my father...”

Silpennon weakly nodded his head. As expected of a high rank priest's child, Aria spoke words that increased the credibility of the evidence.

At the heart of Paladia, the followers of the Demonic god was wriggling within the Zero Class area.



# Chapter 116

## Mission Impossible (3)

What was the Demonic god? Humans worshipped the gods. The Demonic god was the god worshipped by the Demon race. It was as simple as that. However, there was only one reason why Artpe hadn't bothered to worry about it. It was the fact that the true nature of the Demonic god wasn't known.

'There is a myth that's been handed down that the Demon king is the first son of the Demonic god. However, it was merely a myth. I checked the Demon King with my Read All Creation ability, and he didn't originate from the Demonic god. Moreover, I had to travel all over the place to fulfill my duties as one of the Four Heavenly kings, and I never found even a trace of the Demonic god.'

At this point, he surmised the Demonic god was made up by the Demon king to establish his legitimacy. Artpe wondered if the Demonic god was a fictitious figure. Of course, normal Demons had absolute faith in the existence of the Demonic god. Artpe had 'pretended' to believe in the Demonic god in his past life.

"So why are the humans in this place believing in the Demonic god with such fervor..."

Moreover, these were high rank priests of Lihazeta! They were supposed to be the backbone of the temple's forces in Paladia!

"What the hell happened here? How is this possible?"

"These are people who are most favored by our god... Hero-nim, how can this be?"

Both Silpennon and Aria groaned. They didn't want to believe it, but the incontrovertible truth was in front of them. However, Artpe just shrugged his shoulders.

"I'm not sure. This is only a guess, but... Since these people know the power of the gods, it might be easier for them to believe in the existence of the Demonic god too. Moreover, they existed to aid the hero, yet a hero hadn't appeared in several hundred years. Their sense of duty became weathered under the test of time, and a light

stimulus from the outside was able to flip them easily to the other side.”

“Ooh-ooooh. I still don’t get it.”

Aria looked like she was about to cry as she spoke.

“Not yet. I won’t believe it just yet. I can’t be sure with just this. Some psychoes might have written stuff here. I still have 27 other suspicious spots I want to check out. Will you accompany me, Mr Silpennon?”

“In truth, you were suspicious of the temple before everyone else. Weren’t you already moving against them?”

“It isn’t like that! I was just working, yet they did weird things in front of me!”

At this point, Silpennon and Artpe wouldn’t have been surprised if they found out that Aria knew all about what was going on within the temple. Artpe looked at Aria, who was afire with fervor. He discreetly whispered towards Silpennon.

“Hey. Why don’t you seduce her too? She’s completely a big fish.”

“Ah. Since you’ve brought up this subject, I can’t seduce the priestess...”

“Why!”

When Artpe replied with shock and fright, Silpennon grinded his teeth as he told Artpe about what he had witnessed. The holy priestess had acted as she pleased by entering into Artpe’s room. She laid down on top of the bed, and she did things a stalker might do. She cussed out Maetel, and she was brainstorming about separating Maetel from Artpe’s side.

“.....”

When he heard the entirety of Silpennon’s explanation, Artpe was at a loss for words. They had just met, so he hadn’t never expected the holy priestess to be so rotten. Silpennon looked at Artpe, who looked out of it. He firmly told Artpe that it would be impossible to carry out the mission.

“That is why it’ll be impossible for me. You have to take care of her. I’ll work with Aria on the side to gather more evidence.”

“No... Yes, I understand. I’m sorry...”

Artpe had believed that there was still time for the holy priestess to be rehabilitated. However, he never expected her move towards marriage would be so aggressive! It was so bad that she was thinking about eliminating Maetel in the near future... Artpe’s eyes automatically turned cold.

“Do I have to kill her?”

His resolve was about to harden, but at that moment, Silpennon threw out his opinion.

“If it’s you, you probably have a way to resolve this without killing her.”

“However, if I let things be, I’m sure she’ll try to harm Maetel.”

“I’m not so sure. You can probably change that with just few words.”

“.....?”

Silpennon was using the Image Recording Artifact given to him by Artpe. He recorded the bookcase. Of course, he also recorded the content that discussed the worship of the Demonic god and the plot of assassinating the hero by the high rank priests of Paladia. As he did so, he continued to speak as if Artpe’s problem was trivial.

“She is still just talking about it. If I’m to put it bluntly, anyone can curse someone. I wish that rotten bastard, who holds sole possession of Maetel’s heart, would die. If he didn’t exist, I would be by the hero’s side. These kinds of thoughts could be had by just about anyone.”

“Those sounds like your thoughts.”

“That’s right. In truth, I fell for Maetel on first sight.”

The thief spoke in a bold manner.

“There was a time when I wished that I could replace you. However, I realized how much Maetel likes you. I also know how much you take care of Maetel, so I gave up my heart’s desire. Still, a part of my desire is still left within me. I would be lying if I said I don’t occasionally curse you..... so, are you going to kill me?”

“However, you used rationality to suppress such desires. You are working for yourself, and you are working for us. You know what is more important, and you are able to live it out. You left your delusions behind.”

“Right. I like you as much as I hate you. I want to work for Maetel’s sake as much as I like her.”

Silpennon acknowledged Artpe’s words.

“I also believe that it is well within your power to change the psychotic holy priestess. In the first place, she hasn’t acted out her delusions.”

“However, wouldn’t it be weird for Maetel if I tried to seduce a woman with ill intentions towards her?”

“Then you should check with Maetel first. If Maetel says it’s ok, you can completely bring the holy priestess to your side. If you want to use the holy priestess’ abilities, you should be willing to make the effort.”

“You.....”

The content of Silpennon’s words were hard to accept from Artpe’s way of thinking. However, Silpennon continued to speak with a cold light in his eyes. In the end, it was a logically sound argument.

“You are a hero. I know it is good to look out for Maetel’s feelings, but you should spend as much effort into eliminating the Demon King. Don’t you need the holy priestess’ abilities to succeed in that task?”

Silpennon’s words stabbed into Artpe’s heart. Silpenno’s words had hit the bullseye. Up until now, Artpe had based his moves too much on his emotions, and he had done whatever he wanted. Silpennon’s words acted as a brake to Artpe.

So what should he do? In the end, Artpe had no choice, but to agree with Silpennon’s words.

“.....yes. All right. If you can’t do it, then the correct move is for me to step up. I won’t act in haste by being hostile towards her. First, I’ll try to find a way to make her our ally.”

“Good. You are finally acting like a hero.”

Silpennon had a wide grin on his face. When Artpe faced Silpennon’s smile, Artpe couldn’t help but feel that he had lost this round.

When the two of them turned to look at Aria, her eyes were twinkling.

“For some reason... When I saw both of you quarrel with each other, I felt my heart grow hot!”

“You should cool it.”

“You should put it to sleep.”

Silpennon and Artpe spoke their words at the same time. They looked at each other at the same time as they let out a bitter laugh. Unbeknownst to them, their actions had lit a bigger fire within Aria.

This was how the adventure that night came to an end. If they really roamed around any more, they might be found.

Duplicates were made of all the evidence they found, and when the footage was in hand, Artpe was able to leave the place with an easy mind. He didn’t forget to warn Silpennon and Aria.

“I won’t be able to help you guys from now on. It’ll be a whirlwind for me starting tomorrow. Will the two of you be ok by yourselves?”

“Yes, hero-nim! Please leave it to us!”

“Hmmp. Can you not trust me after you saw me disable the traps?”

“.....normally, the ones that are confident always makes the mistake...”

They weren’t reliable, but what could he do? He could only leave them to their own device. Artpe took off the boots he always had on. He handed them over to Silpennon. Silpennon tilted his head in puzzlement as he checked out the boots.

“What is this... Boots?”

“It’s the Blink Boots. It’ll help you in a perilous situation.”

“Even if you give me such an item, I won’t seduce the holy priestess.”

“I’m not giving it to you! I’m lending it to you!”

After giving them future missions, Artpe let out a sigh as he returned to his room.

When the next day arrived, Artpe and Maetel was able to meet the pope for the first time at breakfast.

“My name is Fredrick Kuar Paladia. The two of you can call me by Fredrick.”

“.....I’m Maetel.”

“I’m Artpe.”

Kuar was a middle name given to those that rose to the rank of high priest. The name was also given to their family. Vadinet and Aria possessed it, and of course, the pope possessed that middle name too.

“.....pope-nim?”

“Hoo.”

Maetel tilted her head as she looked at the pope. Artpe smirked. It was as if the pope didn’t even acknowledge their reaction. He just let out a benevolent laughter.

“As expected, both of you possess extremely clear eyes. When I first heard that two heroes were born, I was surprised. However, I can accept it now that I see the two of you. The two of you truly possess the spirit of heroes.”

“I think so too.”

Even at Artpe’s insolent words, the pope just laughed in a good mood.

“I pray that you receive a massive amount of the god’s blessing during your stay here. I will also pray for the heroes...”

“It is much appreciated.”

“Your holiness, I’ll be disappointed if you left me out.”

“Ha ha. I’m sorry. However, your wish for the hero’s safety exceeds mine, right?”

“Hoo-hoo-hooht.”

The holy priestess and the pope exchanged bright laughters. When Artpe saw her, he remembered what Silpennon had said yesterday.

He shouldn't be rash in turning the holy priestess into an enemy. It would be much easier to use couple words to turn her into an ally. Silpennon made Artpe acknowledge this line of thinking.

While he was having such thoughts, Maetel kept looking back and forth between the holy priestess and the pope. A questioning light started appearing within her eyes

“Artpe, I think...”

“Later... I have something I have to talk to you about.”

“A... all right.”

Maetel automatically nodded her head when she saw the serious light in Artpe’s eyes. The holy priestess was sitting across from them, and sparks flew when she caught sight of the exchange between the two heroes. Artpe decided to ignore her for now.

After the breakfast finished, it was free time. Artpe and Maetel were in their room, and they sat facing each other. Silpennon and Aria were probably residing in his room right now. The holy priestess was probably grinding her teeth, and the pope... No, he didn’t have to pay attention to that right now.

“Maetel, I have a request.”

“What is it?”

Maetel sat still as she listened intently to his words. Artpe took couple breaths before he spoke.

“You probably picked up on the fact that the priests here aren’t of their right mind.”

“Yes. I smelled something strange from the pope.”

“It isn’t just the pope. Most of the high rank priests are in the same state. I asked Silpennon to infiltrate this place, so he can investigate further into it...”

“As expected, Artpe knew about it.”

Maetel’s expression immediately became brighter. In truth, she had felt the difference in energy between the holy priestess and the pope. She had been troubled as to whether she should ask Artpe about it or not. However, Artpe confirmed her suspicion on the spot!

“The weirdest smell came off from the guy called the pope. It was like the Demon called Teana, whom we met before. There is a bizarre yet annoying energy...”

“You read him correctly. The pope is a Demon.”

Artpe made an explosive declaration that would have overturned the entirety of Paladia. However, Maetel just nodded her head as if it all made sense! However, Artpe wasn’t done talking yet.

“Currently, the pope is recruiting the high rank priests into the Demon King’s army. However, the holy priestess hasn’t gone over to them yet. Before it is too late, I want to bring the holy priestess to our side.”

“However, that woman seems to be suspicious in an entirely different way?”

As expected, Maetel’s sense was best in the world. Maetel realized that the holy priestess didn’t side with the Demon King’s army, but she was still rotten to the bone. However, Artpe feigned ignorance as he shook his head from side to side.

“That woman is focused only on the occupation of the Hero Class. She is obsessed with fulfilling her role. I... Yes, I think there is still time for her to be rehabilitated. That is why I want a little bit of your cooperation, Maetel.”

“I have a bad feeling about this. I already want to decline it...”

“.....what I’m about to say is a bit awful, but from this point on, I’ll have to... Yes, I’ll have to try to get along with her.”



When she heard those words, Maetel had a dead expression on her face. However, Artpe kept a stiff upper lip as he continued to speak.

“This is only an act. I just have to be a little bit more friendly towards her.”

“Artpe, you sound like a really bad man...”

“You just have acknowledge this fact. The attitude that I will adopt towards that woman isn’t true.”

“Artpe is always like that. You always hide the truth, and you are focused on packaging the outside.”

“Maetel.”

There was a sincere light in Artpe’s eyes. Maetel wanted to pout. She was quite clear in expressing her displeasure, but in the end, she nodded her head.

“Instead, I want you to grant my wish.”

“All right. If it isn’t too over the line, I’ll grant you one wish. However, you cannot work against the holy priestess joining our party. All right?”

“Yes.....”

The contract was satisfactorily made.

Artpe started his work in earnest at lunch.

# Chapter 117

## Mission Impossible (4)

It was a sunny day. The flowers were in full bloom. The bees were flying around, and the birds chirped.

The sky was blue and clear as if it was reflecting the ocean's water. The holy priestess was standing alone in the middle of a well tended and beautiful garden. She was enjoying the sun. Her eyes were closed and there was a smile of pleasure at the corner of her mouth. It truly made her look innocent and pure.

'By looking at her right now, she really is a beautiful girl that deserves the title of the holy priestess...'

It wasn't as if she was wearing an outfit with distinct characteristics. It was a homogeneous white outfit for the female disciples. It was a simple attire that was decorated with a golden cross, which was the symbol of the holy priestess. However, her straight black hair was flowing atop the attire. Her hair acted as the best accessory that could adorn her.

The sunlight was falling on her, and It was as if a halo was being casted around her. However, she was emitting a light that exceeded the sunlight. Even though Artpe knew her true nature, he almost became fooled by her appearance.

"I know the weather is nice, but you shouldn't fall asleep standing up."

"H... hero-nim."

When Artpe approached her, the holy priestess was very taken aback. It was understandable. The afternoon schedule for the hero's party was quite packed. As if Artpe understood all of this, he had a grin on his face.

"I left it all to Maetel. I can't open my mouth wide open as I mindlessly wave my hand to the crowd atop the balcony. Also, I cannot listen to the boring old tales told by those smelly old men."

However, Maetel could do it, since she really was an idiot.

“But... These are tasks you must complete if you want to gain recognition as the hero in Paladia. If you only send Maetel-nim... If you continue to do this, Maetel-nim’s position will grow as Artpe-nim’s position lessens.”

“I don’t care what others think of me. Anyways, I wanted to have a conversation with you. I don’t want anyone to bother us.”

“Ah. Ooh ooh.”

At Artpe’s straightforward words, the cheeks of the holy priestess turned red. She was so embarrassed that she didn’t know what to do with herself. It made him wonder how she was able to say such words in his room. It made him wonder if she was the same woman.

Of course, the holy priestess was already rotten to the roots. She didn’t become rotten, because impurities were introduced from the outside. She had become rotten from within herself. In some ways, she was like Aria. She was an innocent maiden brought up in a good family. In fact, she hadn’t had the opportunity to meet boys of the same age as her. This was why she had grown up pining for the hero!

“I... I see. I guess it can’t be helped. It wouldn’t have gone over well if his holiness saw this, but he is busy right now... Let’s sit here.”

“All right.”

Vadinet was flustered as she led Artpe towards a pavilion setup within the garden. Artpe stopped Vadinet, who was about to go get some tea. Artpe took out a tea set and teapot set from his Dimensional Pouch. When she saw this, her eyes widened.

“You carry all of these with you?”

“In truth, these are all Artifacts.”

“Hoo hoo. I see.”

The holy maiden didn’t take him seriously, but they really were true Artifacts. The tea set could check if the tea leaves had poisonous properties. It could also check for magical effects. If the effects was negative, it was eliminated. If the effects was positive,

it would amplify the effect. It was an Artifact that possessed an excellent ability. After going through Artpe's Reinforcement, the Artifact had reached a pretty amazing state.

"If you inject Mana into it, it'll produce clean water. It'll also boil the water."

"Oh my....."

However, today's leading character wasn't the teapot. Artpe took out another pouch from within the Dimensional Pouch. He carefully took out a handful of the content within the pouch. The tea hadn't been brewed yet, but she could already smell a clear fragrance. She tilted her head in puzzlement.

"Those tea leaves.....?"

"World Tree. I acquired it after I helped the Elves."

"Ah ah. I heard about that incident from others. It was an incident caused by the desires of countless humans. If hero-nim hadn't stepped forward..."

In such matters as this, she manifested normal behavior. She dramatically changed into someone else when it came to anything that dealt with the hero. Artpe let out a sigh as he put the tea leaves into the pot.

"It seems hero-nim isn't only facile in the ways of the magic. You have talent for other disciplines."

"No, I mostly use magic for everything."

The water was letting out a fragrant smell. He waited until the tea cooled to a drinkable temperature. Vadinet was touched by the gesture as she received her tea. She was once again deeply moved when she took a sip. Her blue eyes were filled with a golden light.

"I am so happy that I want to make this day a holiday."

"I see..... I am honored."

"Yes, that is why I want to float this idea to the pope later on."

She was really going all out!? Artpe put on a pleased expression on his face. He wondered if he should quash the holy priestess' idea, but he hesitated. There was

genuine delight on her face for a change, so he didn't want to disturb that. He decided to let it go.

'Her behavior is a bit excessive if she is simply acting this way, because I'm the hero... What the hell is she thinking about? Fuck. I have no idea.'

He had no idea how he could bring this woman back to her right mind. Silpennon had already declined this task, so he couldn't just bully Silpennon into taking up this task again. Still, he was having a hard time believing that this woman had truly fallen in love with him...

"Hero-nim. Hero-nim?"

He had fallen deep within his thought, but he broke out of it when the holy priestess called out to him.

"Hero-nim, weren't you going to ask me something? I've always lived in this place, so there isn't much that I can answer..."

"Ah. That is enough. You'll be part of our party soon, so it would be strange if we didn't know anything about each other. I just wanted to know about you."

"Then....."

The holy priestess' eyes twinkled once again. He thought her reaction was a bit excessive.

"Will hero-nim tell me about yourself?"

"Of course."

That had been his aim from the beginning. Artpe's eyes also twinkled.

"Then... There really isn't much to tell you about me, so I'll start first..."

Her cheeks turned slightly red as she opened her mouth. She faced Artpe's face, and she finally put aside the 'How do I separate Maetel from Artpe?' thoughts from her mind for a short amount of time.

She started telling him about herself.

Maetel was covering for Artpe by doing all the tasks that was scheduled within Lihazeta. She gave a bright yet vicious smiles to the high rank priests, who had been trying to take care of all her needs. She returned to her room. When she entered, she saw Artpe lying atop the bed. He looked like a dried squid stretched out on top of the bed.

“Uh. You are here...”

“Artpe, why do you look so tired?”

“Ooh ooh. I’m really sick and tired of women.....”

Moreover, he really hated trying to please a woman.

“That right. All women other than me is bad. I’m glad to hear you acknowledge this fact.”

“You still don’t understand me completely...”

He had been with Vadinet until Maetel came back. He had been face to face with Vadinet, and during the whole meeting, he thought about what she was thinking and what she wanted. When he was freed from such thoughts, his mind was in a very exhausted state.

“Hmmmmm.”

At Artpe’s words, Maetel narrowed her eyes as she approached Artpe on the bed. She flopped down next to him. There was the faint smell of sweat, but there was also that sweet body odor that he always smelled on Maetel. The two scents mixed together as the smell gently tickled Artpe’s nose. Artpe let out a faint smile as he spoke.

“You smell of sweat. Go wash yourself.”

“Artpe, you are too much! I suffered on my own all day, yet you talk to me that way! Eh-eet!”

Maetel flatly ignored Artpe’s words. She went out of her way to stick close to him. It was a result that he had expected, so he decided not to say anything about it. He just decided to enjoy what was going on right now.

“Did those old men do anything abnormal?”

“Nope. They were pretty tame today. The pope grandpa wasn’t overt about his actions, yet there were a lot of men that were letting out a musty and irritating smell.”

“Are you sure you aren’t confused with the smell of bachelors? Ah-yaht.”

Artpe was having fun with her again, so Maetel made a light fist. She brought it down on top of Artpe’s head. Then she flung her body atop him as if she was a bedding.

“Heavy!”

“You played with that woman the whole day. Artpe is bad. This is the price.”

“I did agree to endure this, but this is quite sudden and unexpected.”

“I might have restrained myself in the day, but it is fine since you are mine at night.”

Mmm. As expected, Maetel was as dangerous as the holy priestess. Artpe made a cool judgement as he made a retort.

“I’m thinking about searching her out tonight?”

“.....Artpe?”

The voice of Maetel could be heard from above Artpe. The voice sounded very brutal. It scared him a little bit, but he regained his right mind. He gave her an explanation.

“It is important for me to keep her occupied during the day and night. I have to make sure she doesn’t have any other thoughts. At the same time, I have to get her to let her guard down against you..... I’m not sure if she really has feelings for me.”

“You two aren’t just going to sleep! You are going to do the other kind of sleeping! You will do the thing you refused to teach me until the end!”

“That is the one thing I won’t do, so you can rest easy.”

Afterwards, Maetel continued to press down on Artpe from the top, and she pinched his cheeks. She continued to torment him. However, it seemed she didn’t realize that her actions were more of reward than a punishment. She wouldn’t be able to break

him until she realized this fact.

“Artpe, you really are too much. It is my pleasure in life to cuddle with you while we sleep...”

“Isn’t it time to find a different pleasure in life?”

“No way.”

“Stop pressing down on me! Stop pressing down! You should study up on the basic concept of shame!”

“I buried all of that within the Ancient Temple!”

While Artpe and Maetel were rolling around the bed as they acted silly, Silpennon was slowly awakening from his sleep. Moreover, he realized that Aria was quietly looking down at his face.

“What are you doing?”

“Your face isn’t that of a thief. I was thinking that was really strange.”

“Hmmp.”

Of course, there was a story behind his circumstance if he got into the details of his background. However, this was a musing coming out from a pure and unsullied girl like Aria. He just snorted as he decided to forgive and forget. He got up.

“Did anything out of the ordinary happen?”

“I skipped the morning roll call. However, people don’t usually notice me, so it wasn’t much of a problem.”

“You are saying such a sad thing as if it is nothing...”

Silpennon let out a bitter laugh as he looked at his surrounding. It was the same as when he went to sleep.



“They gave him a really good room. It is quite unexpected.”

“The holy priestess strongly insisted...”

“She isn’t a holy priestess. She a witch bitch.”

They were in the residential area of the Zero Class, and this room had been assigned to Artpe. There was a standing order that said no one should intrude into the room since one never knew when Artpe would use the room. It became Silpennon’s base of operation thanks to that order.

“I brought you some things to eat.”

“I’ll eat it with thanks.”

Silpennon took the bread in her hands. He took a bite as he picked up the map on the desk. It was the map he started working on last night. It was an inner map for the Zero Class.

“Did he say one week? That is a short amount of time. How am I supposed to go through all of this place in a week? Moreover, I can only move at night...”

“Actually, I practiced after I heard hero-nim’s words yesterday... Like this...”

“Huh?..... Kek!”

Silpennon stopped looking at the map. He raised his head to check on Aria, and he choked. He could hear her voice, but he couldn’t see her anywhere!

“I’m able to hide a little bit better now!”

“Y... you... You were able to do this in one day?”

“Shouldn’t I already know how to do this in the first place...? Isn’t that supposed to be normal?”

Airia once again revealed herself to Silpennon, and she tilted her head in puzzlement. It was such a cute gesture that it got a rise out of Silpennon.

“I won’t be found by anyone. That is why I’ll go on ahead to see if it is safe. If it is, I’ll

call for you, Mr Silpennon.”

“That isn’t the problem... No, it’s all right. If you are so eager, I’m fine with that.”

“E... eager! I just want to return the corrupt temple to its clean state!”

She pretended to be coy as she answered him. However, Aria couldn't hide her child-like excitement. Silpennon wondered if this arrangement would be fine as he once again started his exploration of the Zero Class.

Artpe had been hell-bent in supporting Silpennon in his growth. He was a thief that had his entire body armed with Artifacts. Now he moved in concert with someone that possessed an Innate ability. His worry had been for naught. They weren’t even found once as they searched out the secrets of the Zero Class.

Everyone was carrying out their mission faithfully, and the promised time of one week was one day away.

# Chapter 118

## Mission Impossible (5)

The weather was still nice. When they left Aedia, it had been winter. It was the last part of spring in Paladia.

Artpe and the holy priestess continued to have a date in the same location as they enjoyed the nice weather. They had done this for six straight days.

“Hero-nim, I made you some apple tarts. Would you like to have a taste?”

“Ah. Yes. I’ll have some. As it happens, I wanted to eat some apple.”

“Ya-ho.....! In truth, I thought it might have been better to bake a quiche filled with meat, since you are still growing.”

“No. I eat meat every day, so this is fine.”

Vadinet took out a tart loaded with apple and whipped cream, and she place it on the table. Artpe looked at her with bitter eyes. However, he was met with blue eyes that shone with life. She was filled with great expectation as her eyes remained planted on Artpe.

‘She has no opening.’

During the past six days, he had tried various methods to target her feelings. He tried very hard. However, he had barely made any progress. At the very least, that was his opinion.

This was why he was rethinking his plan at that point. Maybe, the plan was wrong from the start? He was having such thoughts.

“I’ll cut it, so it’ll be easier for you to eat... ah.”

Vadinet took out a knife that looked well matched with her, and she enthusiastically cut the tart into pieces. It might be just his imagination, but it looked as if Vadinet

suddenly had an idea. Her cheeks became dyed red.

Afterwards, she picked up a fork, and she stabbed at a bite-sized piece of the tart. She raised it towards Artpe's mouth.

"W... would it be better if I feed this to you?"

"I'll just eat... Nevermind. Thank you."

Artpe was going to refuse her in the beginning, but he hurriedly changed his words when he saw the disappointed expression on her face. If Maetel found out about this, the holy priestess would be killed. However, if that happened, it was fate.

"Is it tasty, hero-nim?"

"Mmm....."

Artpe closed his eyes tight as he ate what was given to him. The holy maiden was so happy that she didn't know what to do with herself. This sight made him rethink his response.

"Yes. At the very least, it is the tastiest tart I've tasted."

"Ah, jeez. Hero-nim..."

"In truth, this is the first time I've eaten a tart."

"That's really bad. I'll make a lot more tarts for you. From now on, you have to only eat tarts made by me. Hoo-hooht."

As expected, this plan was flawed from the beginning. From the moment she met him, her fondness towards him had been maxed out. So how was he supposed to seduce her more!

'I don't understand her. There is no way I can understand her...'

Artpe ended the date a little bit early, and he returned to his room. It wasn't the room he was residing with Maetel. It was the original room assigned to him. It was the room where Silpennon was hiding.

“You are here?”

“Yes. Hello, Aria.”

“Y... yes, sir. I am happy Artpe-nim looks well...”

She should be used to him by now, but Aria became nervous every time she faced Artpe. Silpennon spoke bluntly when he saw this.

“The way you treat him is different from how you treat me?”

“That’s because Mr Silpennon is Mr Silpennon.....?”

Aria turned to look at Silpennon, and she spoke in a comfortable manner as she answered him. Artpe smirked when Silpennon looked slightly hurt by her words. Silpennon wondered if he should tell her that he used to be the crown prince of Diaz. He wonder if that would allow him to regain his dignity in her eyes. However, he gave up on that idea. He thought he would look pathetic if he did that.

“Silpennon, how are you doing on your side?”

“By the sound of your sagging voice, I can tell that you haven’t made much progress. Everything is going smoothly on our side.”

Artpe glared hard at Silpennon, who had went straight for the jugular. However, Silpennon continued to lay out the documents in a leisurely manner as he spoke.

“Your way of doing things won’t bring about any progress. You are merely preventing the holy priestess from doing anything else. Of course, if your plan is to preserve the office of the holy priestess after you bring down the temple, your plan is a success.”

“Why aren’t I making any progress with her?”

“In the mind of the holy priestess, the relationship with you and her is already complete.”

As expected, Silpennon’s comment was right on the money. The holy priestess had considered Artpe to be her mate from the moment she met him. This was why there was no change in her mental attitude. The good will towards Artpe and the hostility towards Maetel were running down parallel lines.

“How is that possible? That is what I’m asking. Even if her delusion is severe, we just met, so how can she...”

“That is... It is hard to verbalize.”

In his past life, the holy priestess had loved Silpennon. This was a truth that he had clung to. There wasn’t a hint of doubt in his mind about that. Artpe couldn’t overcome his frustration, so he was mumbling to himself. At that moment, Aria carefully spoke up.

“Maybe, it’s because Artpe-nim is handsome.....?”

“.....”

“.....”

Artpe’s eyes narrowed. Silpennon looked at Aria with a similar gaze. Aria became flustered as she tried to explain herself.

“Ah. No! You aren’t simply handsome... I think you are so handsome that anyone would fall for you on first sight!”

“You are quite bold in your confession.”

Silpennon sounded baffled, and this made Aria become much more flustered as she gave her denial.

“That is... Of course, I think Artpe-nim is handsome, but it isn’t like that!... anyways, it isn’t like that!”

“You can speak the truth. That man is a lecher. He likes it more when there is more women.”

“It isn’t like that!”

Aria became angry at Silpennon’s account of the event. Her ears became red to the roots. The sight reminded Artpe of the holy priestess, who he had been seeing for the past couple days. This was why he had unintentionally been in a position to study the anatomy of a woman’s heart. This was why he was uncharacteristically keen in realizing something.

‘She has her eyes set on Silpennon. I guess it was to be expected.’

From Maetel’s perspective, Artpe was her prince. From Aria’s perspective, Silpennon was probably her prince. She had been living a life of a maid, yet a thief had found her as if by fate. On top of that, he was an extremely handsome young man!

She was moving around the temple with a comrade of the hero. She was cooperating with him to find out the corruption within the temple. It really was a storyline from a novel. It would have been strange if she didn’t have any interest in Silpennon!

“Why do all women fall for Artpe? Even our Leseti speaks his name once or twice a day. She speaks his name as if she believes he’ll somehow be magically summoned in front of her.”

It seemed Silpennon was clueless. He was the quintessential obtuse main character.

“.....it seems you are like me in many ways.”

“What? I don’t know what you are talking about, but you are making fun of me, right?”

“A... anyways! I’ll say it again.”

Aria realized that Artpe had realized the truth, so she quickly ended the conversation by giving an explanation.

“If I’m in the holy priestess’ shoes, I would think of the hero-nim as my destiny... I was trying to say that I wouldn’t be able to resist falling in love with Artpe-nim on first sight. It is because the holy priestess-nim is in an ideal situation that all women want to be in.”

“Moreover, the only obstacle in her way is Maetel.”

“That’s correct.....”

The inside of Artpe’s head kept getting more complicated. Silpennon spoke as he watched Artpe.

“Anyways, you should probably change how you treat the holy priestess. We are almost finished on our end”

“You guys are almost finished?..... Ah. I see.”

Artpe let out a bitter laughter as he looked at the documents placed on top of the table. One of the document was the inner map of the Zero Class, and most of the map was covered with black check marks. There really wasn't much ground to cover. They were getting close to the finish line.

“I think our search will end tonight... no, it'll end tomorrow night. Also...”

Silpennon's eyes were filled with a cold rage.

“Their plan is going to be carried out soon. When you sent Maetel to the forefront, Paladia's image of a 'hero' started to move on from you. It was transferred to Maetel. They want to get rid of Maetel before it is too late.”

“Until now, Artpe-nim did well in keeping the holy priestess in check. However, our enemies will try to send an invitation to her before they carry out their plan. They probably believe that Artpe-nim is deep in love with the holy priestess-nim. I believe they will use her to separate Maetel-nim from Artpe-nim.”

“.....that really sounds plausible.”

Artpe silently looked over the files as he listened to Silpennon and Aria. He suddenly raised his head as he mumbled to himself. A high rank priest, who was hiding his demonic energy, had just knocked on the room next door. When Silpennon was notified of this fact, he became anxious. He asked Artpe questions in an argumentative manner.

“What are you going to do? Are you going to stop them right now?”

“I'm not sure... Let's listen in on them for a little while before we make the judgement.”

Artpe placed his hand on the wall of the room, and he activated his Listen-in spell. It was a spell that could capture voices through any sound dampening spells or barrier type spells. He was always thankful of Aedia. It was a spell he took from them.

[It seems the relationship between hero-nim and holy priestess-nim have improved a lot.]

[Does it look that way? Hoo-hue. Ooh-hue hue.]



[However, you always meet him in the same location, and that must be stifling... As it happens, a festival welcoming the heroes is about to open. The pope gave his consent. Both of you will be allowed to go downtown. I came here, because I wanted to notify you of this news.]

[Oh my. What an excellent suggestion...]

As expected, this was how they were going to proceed. From their perspective, it was the most logical step. They would avoid exposing their actions to anyone outside their circle by sending the hero and the holy priestess out for the day. When one took into consideration of the improving relationship between Artpe and the holy priestess, the plan sounded much better.

[I'll have to thank the pope directly. I want to go thank him in person.]

[The pope wanted to personally cheer you on, but unfortunately, he is busy doing another task.]

[He is cheering for me..... It is as if everyone is trying to help me. I am so very happy.]

[We know how much sleep you lost waiting for the hero-nim. It was a sentiment we also felt alongside you.]

On the surface, it sounded like a conversation between a fool of a priest and a maiden in love. However, Artpe knew their intentions, so the conversation gave him the creeps.

[Then we will prepare the carriage for you tomorrow.]

[Yes. I want to thank you again.]

The holy priestess saw the priest out with a bright voice. When the priest left the room, she was left alone in the room. She sat down, and for a moment, she let out a laugh.

[That is such a thinly disguised plan. They want to get rid of Maetel by putting Artpe-nim and me out of the way... It seems they are finally going to show their teeth in earnest. He stank of demonic energy. He couldn't even smell his own rotten smell. Before long, the reputation of the temple will crash to the ground.]

Artpe wasn't too surprised when he heard her words. In his past life, Vadinet had been

a little bit older, but she had known all about the corruption within the temple. It wasn't surprising to find out the current Vadinet also knew about the corruption.

However, the words that came out of her mouth afterwards truly surprised him.

[This can't happen. If I don't go to Artpe-nim right now... He's probably with that bitch right now.]

After saying those words, the holy priestess shot out of her seat. Artpe couldn't comprehend what had just occurred, so he just blinked his eyes. Silpennon and Aria had been watching him, and they wondered what had happened. They looked at Artpe with expectant gazes.

"The internal force within the temple is dead set on killing Maetel."

"And? What about the holy priestess?"

".....it sounded as if she is trying to prevent that from happening?"

He had spoken those words in a dazed manner. Silpennon and Aria had on a similar expression as Artpe.

"I don't believe it."

"Did she realize that you were listening in? What if she knew you were using the Listen-in spell? Maybe, she purposefully spoke those words, so she won't buy any ill will from Artpe-nim!"

"No way. I'm able to manifest my spells without anyone in the Zero Class finding out about it"

"So what the hell happened then? If we take into account the hostility towards Maetel-nim by the holy priestess-nim, she should be cooperating with their plan in earnest! She shouldn't be trying to stop it!"

"That is why I'm also lost as to what is going on!"

The three of them couldn't accept the reality, so they kept prattling on with each other. However, they had forgotten one important fact. Vadinet was heading towards Artpe to tell him the truth. Of course, Vadinet would meet Maetel, who was guarding the

Artpe-less room!

Artpe desperately got up from his seat.

“You guys continue your search. I’ll have to listen in on what Vadinet has to say to Maetel.”

Yes, he would listen in on the conversation between the two. This would allow him to decipher what Vadinet was thinking. He was sure of this.

He’ll know if she was simply a psychotic bitch, or if she had other plans. He would be able to find out if Vadinet wanted to turn into a Demon again in this life, or if she wanted to stand by Artpe’s side as the holy priestess!

“.....we are heading out!”

“Ah. Ah-ooh-ooh. I’m scared. I’m scared to find out what will come of this.”

“.....let’s just continue our investigation. We have to end it quickly.”

In his past life, he hadn’t shown this level of resolve even when he fought against the hero. Artpe looked resolute as he slipped out of the room after placing a camouflage spell on himself. Silpennon and Aria were resolved to just focus on their own work.

# Chapter 119

## Mission Impossible (6)

Maetel was in the midst of rolling around on top of the bed. She was waiting for Artpe to return when she heard someone knock at the door. She froze in place.

[May I enter, Artpe-nim?]

It was a voice that sounded similar to the bell that rang during the morning and dinner hours inside the great temple. It was a very clean and pure voice of a woman.

It was amazing. For some reason, her mood turned very sour when she heard that voice.

“Artpe isn’t here right now.”

[Ooht.....]

When the woman on the other side of the door heard Maetel’s voice, she hesitated. However, she once again knocked on the door.

[Maetel-nim, may I enter?]

“.....you can come in.”

When she said Artpe wasn’t there, Maetel expected Vadinet to turn back immediately. Why was Vadinet searching her out? In truth, Maetel was curious as to what Vadinet wanted to say to her, so she nodded her head. Of course, she regretted her decision when she let the holy priestess in. The holy priestess was shooting darts with her eyes when she came face to face with Maetel.

“Hello. I hope you are doing well, Maetel-nim.”

“Your expression makes me think that you don’t want me to be doing well.”

“Oh my. Unlike how you look, you are pretty quick on the uptake.”

If one was just listening to their conversation, it wouldn't have been strange to see the two girls stand up and shank each other! However, they decided not to fight in earnest at this moment in time. Of course, even if they did fight, Vadinet would be slaughtered by Maetel. It would be her end.

"Didn't you come here, because you wanted to meet Artpe? So why did you insist on coming in here?"

"You are right. I really really wanted to see Artpe-nim. It was driving me nuts. I couldn't wait, so I came here. However, I was plunged into despair when only Maetel-nim was here. Still, I believe I should at least have one conversation with Maetel-nim. That is why I am here."

"If you want to know something about Artpe, you can ask me. I know everything regarding Artpe. Everything."

"Hoo hoo hoo... I'm thankful for such words."

If Artpe was present, he would have died from being unable to breathe when he heard the blunt words being exchanged between the two girls. In truth, he was camouflaged outside of the room, and he was listening to their words through the Listen-in spell. Artpe was listening to their words live, and he started feeling pain in his stomach.

"So why are you here? Did you really come here, because you wanted to ask about Artpe?"

"No. I'll gradually find out about Artpe-nim through my own efforts. Thank you for the offer. It is the thought that counts."

"So what? You said you had business with me. I want you to quickly resolve it before Artpe comes back."

Maetel didn't even think about getting up from the bed. She just stared at Vadinet. Vadinet felt significantly overwhelmed by Maetel's sheer presence, but she gutted it out.

"What does Maetel-nim think about the temple?"

"It is a stagnant and putrid puddle of water."

“.....you are unexpectedly accurate in describing the problem.”

“You are in the middle of that puddle. The pope and the other high rank priests are rotten in a different way, but you are also rotten. The light in your eyes is improper for a person that is called the holy priestess.”

At Maetel’s blunt words, Vadinet let out a bitter laughter. She was already cognizant of this fact to a certain extent.

“That’s right. I’m part of that putrid water. As a priestess, it shouldn’t manifest in me, but I possess unsightly desire, obsession and twisted delusions. I have it all, and I don’t plan on denying this fact. There is only one reason why I can state that I am better than the other priests...”

Vadinet took short and quick steps to approach Maetel. She lowered her head, and she spoke into Maetel’s ear with her lowered voice.

“At the very least, I haven’t conspired with the Demon King’s army.”

“So you knew about it?”

Maetel’s eyebrows twitched slightly. In fact, Vadinet was much more surprised by Maetel’s non-reaction.

“.....I knew about it, but I couldn’t do anything about it on my own. However, he came when I was about to give up. That is why I consider my meeting with Artpe-nim as a fateful encounter. In some ways, it is to be expected. Don’t you think so?”

“You are free to think that Artpe is your destiny. I won’t say anything in regards to that... However, have you told this to Artpe?”

“No. I genuinely wanted to enjoy the sweet time I had with him a little bit more. However, I can no longer do that anymore.”

Vadinet gritted her teeth as she spoke.

“Those bastards finally revealed their teeth. They’ll make Artpe-nim and I vacate the premise. While we are gone, they are going to try to cause you harm.”

“.....”

At that moment, Maetel became surprised more than ever before. She replied as if she couldn't comprehend Vadinet.

"Why are you telling me that?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"If you let it be, there was a chance that I might have died? Wouldn't it be better for you if that happened?"

"Oh my. I'm the holy priestess, and I always stands by the hero's side."

"However, I thought you didn't think of me as a hero?"

Their words were truly scary. Each girl were able to see into each other's true intentions. She only acted like a ditz in front of Artpe. Maetel was truly sharp at reading the heart of others. Vadinet was confident in her ability to hide her her heart from others, but she became very nervous in front of Maetel.

"That's right. I don't think of you as a hero. Artpe is the only hero, and I am very sure of this deep within my heart. I am a holy priestess for a single hero. I am a holy priestess only for him."

"So what?"

"However, it doesn't matter if you aren't the true hero. It doesn't change the fact that Artpe-nim truly treasures you. When he conversed with me, half the topics were about you. I had to try very hard to tamp down my surging anger... You probably didn't know this."

When Maetel heard Vadinet's words, a smile blossomed on her face. In her mind, Vadinet wanted to slap that smile off of Maetel's face, but she continued to speak.

"If you are killed when we are absent, Artpe-nim will receive a very deep wound in his heart. At that point, I will never be able to win against you in my lifetime."

"You are really interesting. You really are rotten."

At that moment, Artpe and Maetel felt the same sentiment about the holy priestess.

“Yes. That is why I can't lose you like this. At the very least, that time isn't right now.”

“Ooh-mm. I like you, because you are honest. Hoo-hee.”

Maetel trilled as she stood up. She was sure Vadinet hadn't said everything within her mind. However, it was enough for now.

“So do you know what their plan is to kill me?”

“I don't have the exact details. However, if I'm to make an educated guess, there is only one possibility. It is the magic circle.”

“Oohk.”

When Maetel heard those words, she groaned. She remembered the disaster in Aedia. As if the holy priestess knew what Maetel was thinking about, she shook her head from side to side.

“The age of Aedia's magic circle can't even be compared to ours. Of course, the level of security present can't be compared either. Even with Artpe-nim's vast knowledge and transcendent magical energy, he won't be able to handle the power of the magic circle. He would need to receive control authority from the pope and the holy priestess.”

“There is nothing impossible for Artpe...”

Of course, she wanted to trust and rely on Artpe too. That is why the holy priestess didn't undercut Maetel's idiotic words.

“As I've told you right now, I also possess control authority to the magic circle. My authority is certainly inferior than his. However, it is enough to interfere with him exercising his power.”

“You want to stop him with just that?”

“I cannot stop him with just that. When we confront him, the pope and the high rank priests will show their true nature. That is why we have to start thinking of a surefire plan that will bring them down.”

At that point, Artpe let his worries go. He was still worried about it, but at the very least, it seemed the holy priestess was capable of rational thought.



‘As expected, she won’t turn out like the one from my past life. Her personality remains the same, but the situation around her has completely changed. In her past life, she believed the ridiculous lie that she can’t mate with anyone that wasn’t a hero. This caused her to go berserk, and she had become a Demon of her own volition. However, there are two heroes now. I’m male. There is no way she would use such an extreme option now...’

Of course, she didn’t hide her hostility towards Maetel, and that did worry him. It seemed holy priestess only saw Maetel as a rival. Basically, she wouldn’t give up the position of holy priestess, while he remained the hero. She wouldn’t try to harm Maetel.

“However, I’m kind of dumb. If you want to make plans, we should wait for Artpe to come back.”

“All right. However, that wasn’t the main reason why I came here. There is something that I want to discuss that is more important than the danger you face.”

“Ho-oh. I see. I also wanted to tell you something before Artpe gets here.”

Huh? If he didn’t go in right now, he had a bad feeling that he wouldn’t be able to see either of them in the eyes for a while.

Artpe had assessed the situation through his intuition. He canceled his Listen-in spell, and he was about to rush into the room. However, the entire Zero Class shook at that moment. A very low vibration rang out.

“.....the magic circle.”

Artpe mumbled in a low voice as he stood still. This was something that occurred only when a very specific requirements had been met. It was the resonance between the magic circle and the Mana.

It was manifesting at the heart of the Zero Class, and it’ll probably spread to the entirety of Lihazeta soon. At that point, he wouldn’t be able to stop it. He would be basically fighting against Mana that had accumulated within the city for the past couple hundred years.

[Nyaa-ah, nyaa nyaa-ah?]

“That’s right……. Shit. The situation is turning into a shit show.”

Until a moment ago, his enemies had been plotting to get rid of Maetel. However, they had suddenly and aggressively assumed the offensive. It didn’t make sense from a common-sense standpoint.

There were only two possibilities that could explain the current situation.

First, there was a possibility that they found out about the holy priestess’ actions. If she was moving against them, their current actions were understandable. However, Artpe was currently using his Read All Creation ability and his spells to monitor the situation nearby. This possibility wasn’t likely, so he shelved it.

That meant the second possibility was the only one left now.

It was the possibility that Silpennon and Aria were found out.

“Those idiots!”

The magic circle wouldn’t have been activated unless something critical had been discovered. Artpe gritted his teeth as he tried to chase down their location... At some point, he realized that the city’s sky was filled with an artificial light.

‘Huh? Isn’t this... ’

The light came from an unknown location in the city, and it stopped at a certain altitude. It created an enormous screen that anyone in the city could see. It was the item given to Silpennon by Artpe! It was the projector Artifact, which was capable of visual transmission!

[I never expected the heroes to know our secret... I hadn’t been worried, because they had been so well-behaved. I never expected them to use underlings. I can’t let that happen. I can’t let them interfere with the grand design of his highness, the Demon King.]

The pope’s voice rang out as it reached the entirety of the city. The quality of the transmission wasn’t great, but one had to take into account that Silpennon was hiding the Artifact from the pope. The fact that he was able to pull this off was amazing in itself.

[Your highness the Demon King? You are the pope. How can you speak those words?]

[You are speaking about the requirement of my position. That cannot bind my will and actions. Do you realize that 'god' is such a pitiful concept? The only thing we can believe is power! Massive power! Moreover, his highness the Demon King possesses that power!]

These were words that shouldn't be spoken by a pope, yet his words came out without constraint. The citizens of the city were dazed as they looked at the massive screen that had appeared above the city. They became shocked when they were faced with the picture and voice of the pope.

The people of the city were all aware of the transmission, and it seemed the pope was the only one that didn't know about it.

[Everything will become tiresome because of you. I planned on cleanly eliminating one hero. At this rate, I won't be able to guarantee the life of both heroes.]

[.....Artpe and Maetel won't be as easy as you think.]

[Hoo-hah. We'll see about that. Since the status of the sacrifice is quite excellent, I'll look forward to seeing the result.]

"Sacrifice.....?"

Artpe knitted his brow as he mumbled to himself. He looked beyond the blurry image, and his eyes finally picked up the figure of a girl thrown into the center of the magic circle.

It was the sight of the maid Aria, who possessed an Innate ability.

# Chapter 120

## Double Crisis (1)

“Artpe!?”

“Artpe-nim!”

If one was awake, one wouldn't be able to ignore the chaos that was sweeping through the entire city. It was that chaotic. The holy priestess and the hero had been immersed in a war that could only be waged between women. However, they saw the images outside, and they heard the voices accompanying the footage. They immediately stood up, and they ran out of the room. Their eyes turned round when they discovered Artpe outside of the room.

“Artpe-nim, do you know what is happening right now!?”

“I have a rough idea, but I don't have time to explain it to you... Just follow me!”

Silpennon had shown him his map today, and there was only one region that hadn't been explored completely. Artpe was successful in narrowing down the location that would be most suitable for what was going on right now. Artpe took the two girls, and he abruptly started running.

“Aht! Holy priestess-nim-kahk!”

A priest had caught sight of them, and he started running towards them. The priest's head was sent flying when Artpe swung his Mana String.

“Act now, ask questions later.”

“Artpe-nim!?”

“It's all right. I won't kill anyone that doesn't possess Demonic energy.”

“Demonic energy... As expected, hero-nim...!”

“I’ll tell you everything later. We have to move right now.”

Artpe let out a light laughter as he tossed the corpse into his Dimensional Pouch. Vadinet was at a loss for words when she saw this.

Artpe seemed to know everything that was going on inside the temple. However, that fact was secondary to what he was showing her. Until now, Vadinet had strictly known him to be a magician, yet he was showing her feats that was unimaginable. It ran counter to what he had shown everyone on the surface.

“Let’s hurry before more priests gather here. We have to save our friends.”

“Who’s Aria? Who is that girl? How come she is taking on the main role of a misfortunate heroine?”

“She is Silpennon’s ally. She also possess an Innate ability, and her magical energy beyond her Record. She is the ideal candidate to use as a sacrifice for a spell.”

Artpe grinded his teeth as he spoke. They were very unlucky. If Silpennon and Aria weren’t discovered by the pope, he would have be able to leisurely move the pieces on the board to his liking...

At least, Silpennon was able to activate the Artifact, and he was able to expose the true identity of their opponent with truly exquisite timing. Fortunately, their true identity was being spread across the city. Artpe was within the Zero Class, yet he could feel the city become red hot. He could feel the anger, shock and suspicion of the people. He could vividly hear the shouts coming from them.

“The masquerade is at an end. Even if we resolve this as soon as possible, it will take a very long time for this city’s faith to recover...”

“It seems Artpe-nim had made preparations for all of this. While you laughed and conversed with me, you ordered your underlings to expose the dark underbelly of the temple to the whole world... I cannot begin to fathom the new Artifact and the type of magic being used right now.”

“Hue hue. Isn’t Artpe too cool?”

“Yes, he really is... He is too amazing.”

It wasn't as if friendship blossomed after their fight. The two women were showing off their affections for Artpe, and in the end, they had made a connection.

Artpe started not liking the idea of being connected to these women.

No. Didn't he have hope yet?

Silpennon will encounter Vadinet at the site, and she'll miraculously awaken to her true love towards Silpennon...

Was he expecting too much?

"Koohk!? Hero-nim....."

"Ok. Bye!"

There were two types of priests that were running around the Zero Class. There were the priests that were a bit slow in the head. These priests still didn't know what was going on. Then there were the priests, who were jittery. They were anxious at the prospect of being found out.

The former group would never cross paths with Artpe's party. The latter group was immediately killed when encountered. Roa growled every time a priest was killed, but he wouldn't let her drain the Demonc energy from the dead bodies.

"Later. I'm pretty sure a more appetizing prey will show up soon."

[Nyaa-ahhhhhh.]

Maetel had a good idea as to who that prey was. Maetel steadily went into her battle mode as she confirmed something with Artpe.

"Artpe, what level is the pope?"

"He's around 340."

"340!?"

"For your information, he is also one of the Four Heavenly King in the Demon king's army."

Maetel and Vadinet felt like they had turned stupid when he dropped this enormous bombshell. He smirked as he continued to speak.

“The Demon King’s army always enjoys hitting humanity on the back of the head. By taking the temple, the hero will despair even if they aren’t able to kill the hero. That is the way of the Demon King’s army.”

Moreover, there were two heroes this time around. This was also the reason why they were insistent on killing one of the heroes. This plan was the height of inefficiency, so it definitely had the touch of the Chef’s hands!

Moreover, the one overseeing this whole plan was...

“His name is Jeriet, and he possesses an Innate ability of Transformation. He is... He is the weakest amongst the Four Heavenly Kings.”

In his past life, Jeriet had been one seat above Artpe in the Demon King’s army. It was fair to assume that he was probably the weakest now.

He was like Artpe. His abilities weren’t focused solely on the martial aspects. If the hero’s party had to fight a higher level opponent, he was probably the most fair opponent.

“I sense something was wrong with the pope, but I never expected him to be a Demon...”

“That bastard eats his chosen prey. The consumption of his preys allows him to duplicate all the special characteristics of his preys. He is able to transform into their form. At some point, he took the place of the real pope.”

“My god...”

She knew their current situation was urgent, but Vadinet couldn’t help it. She asked another question.

“How do you know all of this, Artpe-nim!?”

“It is the nature of my Innate ability. You cannot hide anything from my eyes. Like right now...”

Several Mana Strings extended from his hand, and the strands swiped at empty air.

In the next moment, a part of the hallway naturally crumbled, and a staircase leading downward was revealed.

“My god... Your powers really gives me the chills. As expected of hero-nim...!”

“So, Artpe...”

Vadinet’s eyes were full of love and admiration. On the other hand, Maetel was somewhat used to his abilities, so she unsheathed her sword as she asked him a question.

“Is there a way we can win against a level 340 enemy? We were able to win against the Kraken and the Ancient Kraken thanks to extremely favorable circumstances. The current situation...”

“It really is the perfect situation for us. You don’t know this yet, but there is a reason why Demons don’t directly confront a hero in the human realm.”

“Huh?”

Maetel tilted her head in confusion, but Artpe wasn’t the one to explain the situation. The explanation was given by none other than the holy priestess.

“A Demon’s ability is weakened in the human realm. There is also a difference in Mana depending on the realm. Demons are weakened up to a certain point here, and they aren’t able to manifest their power given to them by their level.”

She continued to speak as the party descended the staircase.

“I’m embarrassed to say this, but... It is possible to weaken them further with the power I possess. It is the significance of being a holy priestess.”

“As their first act, this was why the Demon King’s army decided to render the temple powerless. It is also why one of the Four Heavenly King transformed into the pope to infiltrate this place. He did it despite knowing the danger.”

In truth, the plan had been very successful in his previous life. A Four Heavenly King died in that venture, but he had expertly razed the temple to the ground. The holy



priestess' tragic end was just a bonus.

"However, even if I'm capable of weakening them, I'm merely a holy priestess with no battle capabilities. That is why I acted ignorant until Artpe-nim arrived. I had no choice."

"The fact that you became aware of their intentions is amazing in itself. Even a normal hero won't be able to see through that bastard's transformation ability."

Unfortunately for their enemies, Artpe and Maetel weren't normal heroes. It was as if they were heroes that had experienced killing a Demon King before. On the other hand, Vadinet was only a holy priestess. It was quite the feat that she was able to notice the seditious energy crawling through the inner temple.

"I guess we are just going to rush him. He is level 340, but he is weakened since he is in the human realm. If this woman casts an additional weakening spell... Yes, I think it'll be possible."

"However, the biggest variable that could sway the outcome of this situation is the magic circle."

She had used the magic circle in her past life to transmogrify herself into a Demon. As expected, the holy priestess made an astute observation.

"You said the Demon has a transformation ability, and he ate the pope. In turn, this gives him everything possessed by the pope, so he probably gained the ability to use the magic circle... However, it doesn't seem he was able to activate 100% of its power. Anyways, there is a high probability that he'll use the magic circle to amplify his power."

"No. If he did that, he'll be tied to the magic circle. He isn't just aiming for Silpennon and Aria. He wants to eliminate either Maetel or me. Instead of amplifying his power, there is a high chance that he'll use it for a summoning magic."

"Summon magic... I see. I didn't realize there was that possibility..."

In truth, similar words were written inside the exchange diary found within the Zero Class by Silpennon and Aria.

At the time, it said they wanted to summon a level 250 magical beast. However, they

had a sacrifice now, so they would probably attempt to bring out a much higher level magical beast. It might not be a one-off. They might attempt multiple summons.

The price of this magic was Aria...

Artpe bit his lips.

“She said she wanted an active role, but she keeps acting like a heroine in a knight’s tale.”

“Artpe... That girl too...?”

“No, she isn’t mine. She’s with Silpennon.”

After descending the staircase, they ran through a dark hallway. The voice and the image being projected above the city no longer reached them. However, one thing was for sure. Aria’s situation would not get better. In fact, her situation was turning graver by the minute. Even if one factored in the fact that the Four Heavenly King Jeriet was weakened, Silpennon hadn’t reached level 220 yet. Jeriet wasn’t a foe that could be overcome by Silpennon.

‘If he is like the one I knew, he’ll act big. He’ll try to show off. He’ll give the hero’s party the time to make preparations. He’s supposed to be the prototypical Four Heavenly King of the Demon King’s army... If he finds out about the footage that is being sent out through Silpennon’s magical tool, the situation will get worse. Then Silpennon will try to save Aria even if it is unreasonable for him to do so. He might get hurt... Shit!’

That was why it would have been better if they weren’t found out in the first place!

If so, the reformed holy priestess would have worked with the two heroes to gratifyingly fuck over the pope and his core allies. Artpe would have been able to induce a classic scenario. However, he was about to lose two precious talents if things continued along this path! On top of that, the temple was going to be destroyed in its entirety!

“Artpe! Over there!”

“Kill them all!”

“Understood!”

The secret hallways reached all corners of the Zero Class. The priests, who had thrown away their god to worship the Demonic god, were using the secret hallways to converge on the magic circle!

Artpe and Maetel were merciless as they cut down anyone in their path. Vadinet was very flustered as she watched them. Then she finally realized she could do something to help them.

“O... oh, my god! The heroes are fighting against evil as you’ve ordered. Please imbue them with power suitable for this situation! Hero Bless!”

This was something only a holy priestess could use on a hero. It was a buff spell. This was obvious, but this was the first time Artpe and Maetel had received it.

There wasn’t a clear amplification of their power, but it felt as if their bodies were light as feather. The feeling was temporary, but it felt as if they had leveled up multiple times at once.

“It is a buff that increases the quality of your soul! I thought it might be something that both of you must have when facing an opponent with a higher level...”

“Ah, yes. This is the first time I’ve received a buff. It’s something new.”

Fortunately, this blessing wasn’t headed only towards Artpe. It would have been a lie if he said he hadn’t been worried. However, even Vadinet was able to discern what was most important right now.

When Artpe saw this, he carelessly smiled towards Vadinet. At his gaze, Vadinet felt embarrassment and happiness. She lowered her head.

‘Does Artpe-nim know about what I did back then...? Ah. Ah-ooh-ooh. Artpe-nim is so advanced in the path of magic that he might have noticed it. I see. He acted completely innocent during the Blessing... I can’t believe how truly great he is.’

It didn’t matter what Artpe did. In the end, she felt herself liking him more. Her feelings surged. In that aspect, she was similar to Maetel. Artpe, who was unaware of her feelings, just continued to move forward.

After several more priests(There were only 20 priests residing within the Zero Class. They had killed a lot of them.) were killed, they were finally able to reach the scene.

“Silpennon, are you somehow holding out... Huh?”

He was ready to overturn everything as he poured his magic into his Magic String. He forcefully kicked the door open, and he saw the underground square. Artpe was having a hard time believing his eyes.

He didn't want it to happen, but he had been ready for the worst case scenario of Aria being sacrificed. He had been prepared to face a level 300 three-headed monster.....

“Aria!”

“Ooht. Ooh-ahhhhhhhh!”

“Koohk. Y... you bitch!”

The center of the magic circle was still letting out an uncontrollable amount of light.

However, the magic wasn't completed for the duration. The Mana of the magic circle was pouring into the sacrifice, who had been placed in the middle of the magic circle.

“What the.....?”

Artpe rubbed at his eyes as he looked at the scene again. He used his Read All ability, but the information he received wasn't different from what he already knew.

Aria was using her Innate ability.

She was assimilating with the magic circle.

# Chapter 121

## Double Crisis (2)

“She is a lowly level 3 civilian. She possesses an Innate ability, but she is of extreme low station! How can this lowly bug use the magic circle’s power!”

“Koo, koo-ooooooooh-ha-ahhhhhh!”

It seemed the old pope didn’t even bother hiding his identity anymore. He was too taken aback by the situation. He extended his hand towards Aria.

However, his magic was neutralized and dispersed into the magic circle when it touched Aria. It was turned back into Mana, and it was imbued into Aria. This cycle had probably repeated itself once Aria went into her assimilation state.

This was obvious, but it was impossible for Artpe to do anything to her either. He didn’t possess the control authority, and he didn’t possess the Assimilation ability.

“M... my god.....”

“Artpe, if you are here, do something! At this rate, Aria will...!”

When faced with the sight that transcended every expectation, Artpe was struck dumb. Silpennon became aware of the intrusion. He yelled out in anger towards Artpe.

His body was already a mess. Fortunately, he suffered normal wounds. Silpennon hadn’t suffered any critical wounds. It seemed Aria had awakened before Jeriet could attack Silpennon in earnest.

“From my point of view, I’m critically wounded. These aren’t normal wounds, you bastard... Koo-ook!”

“You are an idiot. If it can be healed, then it isn’t a critical wound. Vadinet, please heal that guy.”

“If it is Artpe-nim’s request, I will always do as you wish!”

If possible, he wanted to buoy the love of Silpennon from her past life to the surface. He left Silpennon in Vadinet's care. Afterwards, Artpe's entire body emitted Mana Strings, and he faced off against the Four Heavenly King.

"Koohk, hero. You were quick in getting here."

Nervousness was clearly etched on his face. If his plan had worked, he would have successfully summoned a magical beast by the time the heroes arrived at this location. He would have felt reassured with a magical beast under his control. However, the magic circle was out of his control now, and the holy priestess had arrived with the heroes. It was the worst case scenario for him.

"It seems you can't do as you please with the magic circle, Four Heavenly King Jeriet of the Demon King's army."

Artpe judged that Jeriet's mind wasn't in a healthy state right now, so he wanted to further destabilize his mind. He attempted one of the critical skills of a Four Heavenly King called 'You really thought I didn't know?' skill.

"How did you know my name!?"

"Yes. I was thinking it was about time. The hero would fight the weakest amongst the Four Heavenly King, and after a fierce struggle, the hero would win in the end. The weakest amongst the Four Heavenly King would tell the hero that there are three stronger Four Heavenly Kings left. This would make the hero bite his lips in consternation. I knew this moment would come!"

"What!? How did you know I'm the weakest...!"

Artpe was skillful in using the tactics of a Four Heavenly King. This was why he took the offensive by attacking Jeriet's mind. Jeriet was extremely flustered, yet Artpe's attack wasn't at an end yet.

"However... By the look of things, you weren't able to pull it off. Don't you think so?"

As the weakest amongst the Four Heavenly King, Jeriet was in charge of filling the hero with despair and fear! However, things weren't turning out as he expected. The magic circle was out of his control, and he was sweating buckets in front of it. How was such a sight supposed to strike terror into the hearts of Artpe's party? It was impossible.

“Hoo. I’ll compliment you for finding out that I’m one of the Four Heavenly Kings within the Demon King’s army... You are getting too big for your britches! It has only been several years since you’ve developed your power as a hero, yet you dare to think that you will be able to defeat me!”

Artpe turned a questioning look towards Silpennon, who was being treated by Vadinet. He tried to confirm something with Silpennon. Silpennon discreetly raised his thumb.

Everything was perfect now.

“However, Jeriet... You are currently in your transformed state. It is true that it would be difficult for us to face you in your true form. However, you are borrowing the form of the pope. You are much weaker than normal right now. Isn’t that right?”

“Ha. It is merely a level penalty of 20%.....”

Jeriet was speaking in an overbearing manner, but his words trailed off. He caught sight of the countless Mana Strings forming around Artpe, and the bastard sword. The bastard sword gripped within Maetel’s hand was letting out a bright light. Jeriet hadn’t expected much growth from them since only 3 years had passed. However, the heroes were quite menacing right now.

If he returned to his Demon form...

“Shall I guess as to why you haven’t returned to your original form?”

“Ridiculous. You are merely a human, yet you want to read my intentions?”

“If you return to your original form, you’ll lose the control authority over the magic circle. Am I right?”

“Koohk!?”

He was right. The only reason why the Four Heavenly King was able to activate the magic circle was thanks to taking on the form of the pope after eating him. If he returned to his original form, he would lose all advantages he gained from mimicking the pope.

“Hoo-ahhhhhhhhhhh!”

He wanted to quickly activate the magic circle, and he wanted to return to his original form. If that happened, he could put pressure on the heroes. He would be able to create a truly perfect picture. He had been anticipating for such a scene...

“Artpe, what is Aria doing? Is it dangerous?”

“It is dangerous. I don’t know how she is able to do what she is doing right now.”

“What are you saying!?”

In truth, it was a desperate situation, yet Artpe continued to make fun of his enemy. He was taking his time. However, as he kept attacking Jeriet’s mind with truths, he was trying very hard to comprehend what was going on right now.

First, he knew that Silpennon and Aria had been exploring the last region left in the Zero Class. They were unlucky, and they were found out by Jeriet.

Jeriet realized that it would be impossible to quietly dispose of Silpennon and Aria. Moreover, he realized that Aria possessed an ability that would make her a great sacrifice for the magic circle. This was why he had revealed his true nature by activating the magic circle. Silpennon had been smart, and he was able to use the Image Transmission artifact to broadcast everything above Lihazeta.

Silpennon also attacked the pope in an attempt to save Aria, but his ability was sorely lacking to be able to fight one of the four Heavenly King. He had suffered grievous wounds, and Aria was in danger of dying after being used as a sacrifice for the magic circle.

This was the information he had discerned before he entered this place. This was why he couldn’t guarantee the lives of Silpennon and Aria before he got here. When he entered the underground Plaza, he had found Aria placed in the center of the magic circle as a sacrifice, and she was assimilating with the magic circle’s Mana. She was doing an excellent job fusing with the magic circle.

Even if Aria’s Innate ability was amazing, Artpe was having a hard time accepting what was going on. If she was able to assimilate with anything or anyone she wanted, she would have already reached the realm of the gods.

The magic circle was completed through the countless years. A magic contract was created, and only a very limited number of people was able to use the magic circle.



Despite this fact, Aria was assimilating with the magic circle, so of course, Artpe was shocked.

If she was able to do this, he was sure Aria was...

“All right. Jeriet-nim will personally take care of you all!”

It was already a situation where he couldn't use the magic circle according to his will. This was why he gave up on controlling the magic circle. He took off the pope's outer shell, and he regained his original form of a Demon!

...for now, Artpe let Jeriet be.

Artpe yelled towards Vadinet. She had finished healing Silpennon, so she was getting to her feet.

“Vadinet! Give that girl... I want you to give that girl a Blessing!”

“What!?..... understood!”

She didn't fully understand what Artpe wanted, but since it was a order from him, she would follow it. Vadinet used all the power available to her as the holy priestess, and she activated her Blessing skill. She aimed it towards the girl located at the center of the magic circle.

It was a basic skill of a priestess that allowed her to assign a Class to a person. Once assigned, one had to carry the same Class for the rest of one's life!

“Why are you all so carefree in this situation.....”

“Maetel!”

“Leave it to me!”

Jeriet couldn't make neither rhyme nor reason of their actions, so he expressed his anger.

He was about to interfere in their actions, but all the Mana Strings surrounding Artpe's body was shot towards him. A magical barrier was created around Jariet. It was childsplay for Jariet to destroy each Mana String, but thousands were rushing all at

once towards him. He wouldn't be able to move forward until he destroyed all of them!

"How dare you use such tricks on a Four Heavenly King... Koohk!?"

He was barely able to free his body, but by that time, Maetel had reached him by using her Acceleration skill. Maetel's eyes shone as she swung her bastard sword!

"Artpe, help me!"

"Of course!"

If Jariet was facing one hero, it would have been enough. However, the teamwork between the two heroes were perfect. The Four Heavenly King Jariet was in the human world. Moreover, he was within the Zero Class where most of the holy energy was concentrated. On the other hand, Maetel and Artpe had been strengthened after receiving a buff from the holy priestess. They attacked the weakened Jariet with everything they got!

A wing that let out a brilliant golden light sprouted from each of their backs. This deepened the connection between the two heroes, and it raised each other's power. As a Four Heavenly King of the Demon King's army, he despised true bonds between comrades. The bond between the two heroes was clearly manifesting in magical and physical form, and they were tormenting Jariet!

"Insolent..... All right. I'll kill you first, bitch!"

Even if he didn't use his Transformation ability, Jariet was a legit level 340 Four Heavenly King. His body was covered in black leather, and black Demonic energy emanated from all over his body. The Demonic energy was letting out an ominous light as his body was strengthened. The ominous light pushed against the Hero's Aura.

"The power I gathered from those that I transformed into can be used to strengthen my body... This ability allowed me to climb to the top of the Demon King's army. It allowed me to become one of the Four Heavenly Kings!"

"I already know everything, so stop with the commentary! Just fight me!"

"Hoo-ahhhhhhp!"

It was the portion of the fight where he was supposed to boast about his abilities, yet

Artpe was ignoring him. Artpe shot his spell towards Jariet. Maetel shoved the bastard sword into Jariet's hardened stomach, and blood sprayed out. At the same time, she activated her Bash skill. It ripped apart his guts!

"Koo-ha-ahhhhk!"

They were heroes with no ethics!

Jeriet desperately retreated backwards. He gritted his teeth as his wound healed itself. In the past, one of his prey had a regeneration ability, so he would just need five seconds to...

"Stop commenting on your abilities!"

"Koo-ahhk! I didn't even speak those words out loud!"

In Artpe's absence, Jeriet had become the new weakest Four Heavenly King. It was true that he possessed an amazing ability, but it also came with a downside. The added skills and abilities related to his Transformation skill strengthened his body and special characteristics. However, there was a slight delay before he could use these added abilities. This very short delay was enough for Maetel and Artpe to attack him!

"Koo-haaaaah!"

The enraged Jeriet swung his thick arm, and he struck out at Maetel! Maetel had activated her Acceleration in time, so she was able to dodge the blow. However, the destructive force within his arm still remained. His arm sliced through empty air before it struck the wall of the secret space.

Boom!

The wall exploded, and a deafening sound accompanied it.

In a flash, the secret room was exposed to the sky, and moonlight shone down upon everyone.

".....mmmm?"

Jeriet finally realized that something had slipped his mind.

“Now that I think about it, the holy priestess was...”

The holy priestess should be supporting the two heroes in battle, but she wasn't doing anything.

Why was that?

Was she unable to throw away her desire to monopolize Artpe?

Was she going to wait until Maetel was dead?

No, that wasn't it. She was still carrying out Artpe's orders.

Her eyes were wide open, and she was shocked at the reality that was supposed to be impossible.

“A... Artpe-nim. Perhaps... This girl is...!?”

“Hoo-ahhhhhhhhhhhhh!”

The duration of the Blessing depended on the Class' special characteristic. At its shortest, it took one second. There were cases where it took over a minute. Vadinet was finally able to complete her mission.

Jeriet's rampage had caused a hole to form in the ceiling, and an unusually bright moonlight shone through it. The Class given to Aria by Vadinet was clearly revealed to the world.

“Hoo-ooh, ha-ahhhhhh.....”

After earning her Class, the girl had changed into a new existence. She finally awakened. Her eyes opened.

“My god.....!?”

“Holy prieste...”

She possessed golden eyes that was letting out an unimaginably brilliant light.

# Chapter 122

## Double Crisis (3)

The magic circle was etched into the capital of Paladia. There were only two people capable of activating the magic circle within the Zero Class. This was also true for the entirety of Lihazeta. It was the pope and the priestess.

This was probably the product of the contract made by the predecessor hero. Even if Aria possessed the Assimilation ability, there was no way she could easily circumvent the safety measures. There was no way she should have had such an easy time assimilating with the magic circle. On top of that, she had been placed within the magic circle as a sacrifice to activate black magic. It made what happened all the more unlikely.

If so, what was the only possibility that explained this situation?

That's right. If Aria was a holy priestess, it would easily explain the current situation.

[Aria Kuar Serieta]

[Level : 36]

[Holy Priestess]

[Innate Ability : Assimilation]

"Y... you realized this, so you ordered me to....."

"Of course. There are two heroes, and there is no rule stating that there can't be two holy priestesses."

He was speaking in this manner, but he was also taken aback when he realized his

prediction had been correct.

Why?

There were two heroes and two holy priestesses.

It meant it wouldn't be strange if there were two Demon Kings!

"How can this be....."

On the other hand, Vadinet had appointed the new holy priestess with her own hands. She was looking at Aria, and Vadinet clearly looked agitated.

Was it because another girl occupied the same position of the holy priestess that she had considered it to be solely hers?

Or was it anxiousness that arose from the possibility of having another rival in her pursuit for love?

Or was she feeling sympathy for the girl, who shared the same fate as her?

Maybe, all of them were the correct answers or it might all be the wrong answers.

However, she was sure about one thing. The rule, which she had considered to be absolute, was completely broken into pieces.

"Aria, are you ok!?"

"Ah. I can't... I'm not able to completely control the magic circle!"

After earning her Class, she was going through the process of leveling up after absorbing the Record of the magic circle. Even with the change, she couldn't completely control the magic circle.

When Jeriet gave up his control of the magic circle, the energy of the black magic had run amok. If Aria relaxed even a little bit, her body would be swallowed up by the runaway magic circle. Even if she had become a holy priestess, the benefit brought on by the change was extremely limited.

"E... even if there are two holy priestesses, it changes nothing! I'll kill both holy

priestesses, and it'll just raise the fear and despair felt by the humans!"

The appearance of the second holy priestess made Jeriet feel very flustered. However, he still acted brave. In truth, he hadn't received much damage from Maetel's attacks, and he was also attempting counterattacks now. It was clear that he still had power to spare.

However, the mere presence of a holy priestess weakened a Demon's energy. With one holy priestess, the heroes were able to compete with him even with the huge level difference. When there was only Vadinet, Jariet could push them back using the advantage of having a higher level. However, when Aria perfectly transitioned into being a holy priestess, her presence suppressed the power of Demons. Even if Jeriet was a level 340 Four Heavenly King of the Demon King's army, he couldn't help, but feel burdened!

If things continue along this path, there was a chance that he would die before he could accomplish anything. This thought made him break out into cold sweat.

'This is embarrassing to do as a Four Heavenly King, but... It would be stupid to drag this out any further. The initiative was completely seized by the heroes. For now, I have to.....!'

"Hoo-ohhhhhhhhh!"

"Kyahhhhk!?"

His eyes shone in the next moment, and the black demonic energy roiling near his heart started to manifest in an instant. The overwhelming amount of Demonic energy pushed back Artpe's Mana with brute force!

"Koohk!? You are all brawn and no brain. As expected of the weakest amongst the Four Heavenly King...!"

"Evil Fist!"

Demonic energy settled around his thick fist, and it turned into the shape of a hammer. At once, he brought it down towards Maetel. It was called a fist yet it wasn't a fist! This was the gist of the skill!

"Eeek!?"

Maetel had anticipated Jeriet's fist, but instead of his fist, her vision was filled with the fast approaching Demonic hammer. Maetel knew her party members would be hurt if she avoided this blow, so she raised her bastard sword to face the attack head on.

"Koo-ha-ha! You are quick like a little mouse, but it seems you can't run away with your comrades in danger!"

An enormous shockwave was created when the two clashed.

"Kyahhk!"

"Maetel!"

She wasn't even in a proper defensive stance, and she was inferior in terms of level.

Will she be able to block a strike that contained the entire might of Jeriet? The shock was felt all over Maetel's body, and she was sent flying backwards.

Artpe had been ready to attack Jariet with all the Mana Strings he had manifested. He clicked his tongue, and he turned his Mana Strings into the shape of a soft barrier. He caught Maetel.

Moreover, this was what Jariet had been waiting for. In a flash, he shot into the air, and he flew towards the hole in the ceiling. He shot into the sky.

"Jeez. I never expected someone that's higher level than us to run away, so you are catching me off guard. That bastard is a more cowardly and cheap loser than I thought!"

"You can talk all you want! Your attempts to provoke me will no longer work!"

After catching Maetel, Artpe desperately sent his Mana String towards Jeriet. However, the Four Heavenly King had already gained distance from the two holy priestesses, so he had regained his strength. He could easily resist against the Mana Strings!

"I'll retreat for now, but I will surely take one of the two lives of the heroes next time! Holy priestesses! It'll be the same for you two bitches! Hear me all humans! His majesty the Demon King's shadow had fallen over the holy nation of Paladia! You should all tremble in fear! Ooh-ha-ha-ha-ha!"



It seemed he knew about the image transmission Artifact! Or he was late in realizing it, so he was probably putting on an act! He was trying his best to act naturally!

Jariet was about to exit the scene using his teleportation spell, but a figure suddenly appeared above him.

“You forgot about me, you son of a bitch!”

“Koohk!”

It was none other than Silpennon. He had just been healed by Vadinet, so there wasn't much strength left within body. Still, he had activated the Blink Boots, which had been loaned out to him by Artpe. Silpennon was successful in getting behind Jariet!

“Ha!”

He concentrated all his Mana into a Unique skill of a thief. It was called the Lucky Strike. He planted his dagger in the back of Jariet's head. There was such a big level difference, so the damage caused wasn't that big. However, Jariet lost a little bit of his balance. He slightly dipped towards the ground, and that was enough...

“Now, Artpe-nim!”

Jariet had entered into the sphere of influence of the two holy priestess, and his body weakened in an instant. He was letting out black smoke. She didn't want to lose this opportunity, so Vadinet used the spell called God's Chain. Her spell restricted the movement of Jariet, and it applied a debuff that decreased his immunity.

Even if Vadinet was outstanding, she couldn't overcome the wide gap in level with the Four Heavenly King. She could only restrain Jariet for couple seconds, but that was enough!

“Good job, Vadinet!”

“Koo-hahk!?”

Afterwards, Artpe shot out couple thousand strands of Mana String. It took the form of an enormous spear, and it embedded itself in Jariet's stomach!

“Ggoo-rooooooohk!”

The large spear had embedded itself when Jarjet was defenseless. In the next moment, the Mana Strings came undone inside his body, and Hyper Rubbing was used through the several thousand strands of Mana Strings.

The Hyper Rubbing spell had already reached level 70. When the output of the spell was maximized, the friction was capable of causing the Demon's blood to boil! The spell was being used simultaneously through the several thousand strands of Mana String. Of course, even a Four Heavenly King would be damaged by it.

"Maetel."

"Hoo-ooooooooh....."

The next person up was Maetel.

The golden wing unfurled behind her shoulder as it let out a light. Maetel withdrew deeply within herself as she gripped the bastard sword hard. Artpe had used Reinforcement on her sword, so if one of talking about the sword's ability to amplify magical energy, the bastard sword performed similar to the holy sword of legends. The bastard sword had developed to that extent!

"Since you attacked me with all you got... I'll return the favor by attacking you with all I got!"

She transferred all her reserve power to her bastard sword. The sword let out a brilliant golden aura. She leapt towards Jeriet, and she shoved the sword into his stomach.

That was painful enough, yet in the next moment, Artpe retracted the Mana, which had been supplying the Hyper Rubbing spell. He rerouted his Mana to Maetel's Aura. It allowed her to do additional damage!

"Kya-hahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhk!"

The pain had already went past the threshold that Jeriet could endure, so the sound of his scream reached the heavens. However, Artpe wasn't done with his maneuvering.

It was still immature, but he had his Materialization spell. It was a spell that could change his magic into Mana, and his Mana into magic! It allowed him to freely change back and forth!

Artpe and Maetel were sharing Mana through Maetel's Record Master Skill. He combined all his Mana with Maetel's Mana, and he kept cycling through the Hero Mana, Mana String, Hyper Rubbing spell and Blaze spell. Jeriet was continually attacked.

"Koo-hoohk! Ggooh-ahhhhhhhk!?"

"When the second holy priestess showed up, when you exposed your back to Silpennon, and when your stomach was pierced by me, you had already forfeited your life!"

"Amazing..... Hero-nim didn't even need to terminate his spell.....!"

There were two processes in which Mana was consumed when manifesting a spell. The first was the consumption of Mana in the process of shaping the spell. The second was the consumption of Mana as one maintained the spell as one attacked one's enemies.

Artpe had to take a hit as he consumed Mana to manifest this spell. However, his Materialization spell didn't require Mana consumption to maintain it, and he could continuously change the shape of the Mana according his will. Unless one was an extraordinary monster, their enemies would be killed before Artpe and Maetel's Mana ran out!

"Goohk, ggoo-roo-roo-roohk.....!"

Jeriet was one of the Four Heavenly Kings, yet he wasn't an extraordinary monster. As he tried to resist against Artpe and Maetel's attacks, he tried to somehow activate his Mana. He wanted to use a spell. However, he couldn't withstand the attack, so he fell to the floor.

"Kah-hoohk!"

When he opened his mouth, a massive amount of black blood spilled out. Jeriet squeezed out his last bit of strength to get out the words that seemed to be engraved in his DNA.

"Y... you... ,shouldn't breath a sigh of relief... I am... I am merely the weakest amongst the Four Heavenly Kings..."

“Yes. You really lived up to the name of the weakest amongst the Four Heavenly Kings. You were really weak. In fact, I’m not even afraid of the next one that’ll show up!”

The next one up was the 3rd ranked Four Heavenly King. She was so strong that she couldn’t even be compared to this bum. It was the Fire Witch Etna. He knew this information, so at this moment, he decided to make fun of his enemy. After he was armed with this determination, Artpe belittled Jeriet! It was super effective!

“You bastard... kuh-huhk!”

His last words were supposed to leave behind fear and despair. When Jeriet heard Artpe’s words, his blood pressure rose, so he could no longer speak. He bled out before he could say anything. Jeriet had taken Artpe’s place as the weakest amongst the Four Heavenly King. The weakest Four Heavenly King died at the hands of the former weakest Four Heavenly King.

“Koohk!”

The fact that Jeriet had died was confirmed when a splitting headache assaulted Artpe and Maetel. It had truly been a while since they’ve felt this.

Why didn’t Artpe attack Jeriet as soon as possible?

Why did he wait until Jeriet regained his true form?

He wanted Jeriet to shed all the penalties that would be incurred by killing him in his pope form. Artpe wanted the full EXP that would come with killing his real level 340 body.

“You did that for such a selfish reason!?”

“Of course!”

One thing was for sure. If they could endure the pain, Artpe and Maetel would easily surpass level 300!

“Ahh-ooh! Hurts!”

“Ah-ooooooooooooh!”

However, the dance of pain included two more members this time. The root cause of why they were able to go toe to toe with the Four Heavenly King was the power imbued to them by the holy priestess Vadinet. Then there was the thief Silpennon, who had prevented Jeriet from running away in a crucial moment.

Their level was especially low compared to Artpe's party. For Artpe and Maetel, they had gained EXP that they could have gained in a month. This was why Silpennon and Vadinet suffered pain that couldn't be compared to what was being felt by Artpe and Maetel.

"Head. My head.....!"

"Hero-nim, it hurts so much. I think I need the touch of hero-nim's hands...!"

"It is growing pain, so stop being a baby! That isn't important right now.....!"

After confirming the death of the Four Heavenly King, he immediately turned his head away. He caught sight of Aria, who remained in the magic circle. She was desperately using her Innate ability to keep the rampaging magic circle in check.

"We have save her right now. Ah, Silpennon. This is secret information from now on, so I want you to end the transmission."

"Secret? I've already ended transmission of the images..."

"You want to save her? How? Ah, wait a moment. I think I got it."

The Demonic energy had caused the Mana to run amok. Aria was being tormented, because she was accepting this Mana. Even if Maetel wasn't great at studying, she was able to discern a pattern!

"You are going to create a new race again!"

"Bzzt. Wrong."

Artpe dismissed that idea as he took out a thick book.

"What's the point of making a new new race when she is the holy priestess. This time I'll let her keep her human form."

In the past, Artpe had rewritten this magical tome. The magical tome had deviated from its original purpose. At that moment, a miracle opened its eyes through Artpe's hands.

# Chapter 123

## Double Crisis (4)

When Artpe opened the magic tome, it let out a soft light. It started to manifest its Mana in a specific direction.

Good.

Since he had re-written the tome with his hands, he had secured a link with it.

He connected that link to the magic circle. The light being emitted by the magic tome and the magic circle started to mix. The equilibrium that was created was quite mysterious.

“Ah. Artpe-nim.....?”

When Aria realized that Artpe’s Mana was connected to the magic circle, she looked at him in surprise. Artpe wasn’t just simply meddling with the magic circle. He possessed clear authority over the magic circle, and he was changing the magic circle’s magic.

Yes, he had no reason to hide this now.

When he poured in his Mana to register with the Warp Gate, he had gained administration rights to anything related to the temple. He also had a degree of authority over the magic circle. If Aria and Silpennon hadn’t been discovered by the pope, he would have resolved everything using this.

Of course, there had been a catch. It wasn’t just about killing the Four Heavenly King. The key issue was finding a way that would allow everyone to level up as much as possible in the process of killing the Four Heavenly King. This mainly applied to Silpennon and the holy priestess Aria. Later on, the holy priestess Aria was added into this group.

The last part of his plan had gone awry. If he took that part out, everything had progressed very splendidly.

“H... how is this possible...”

“Don’t worry about it. I’m going to cancel the Summoning spell, so you just have to maximize your Assimilation ability from now on.”

“B... but...”

“It’s all right. There is something I’ve prepared for this moment.”

The magic tome let out a light. The pages started to flip on its own. Artpe’s eyes became very withdrawn as he looked at the magic tome.

He was thinking about his past experiences. He thought about the times when he had to guide Sherryl and Sienna. Then there was the time where he extracted Demonic energy from the Demon Tiana... He consolidated his experience through the magic tome, and he created a spell. He transferred the spell into the magic circle.

The rampaging magic circle felt a new order come in. There was unyielding firmness behind the order, so the magic circle couldn’t resist. It started changing the shape of its magic!

[Nyaa?]

“Nope. You have no role this time. You should just go over there and suck on the Demonic energy from the corpse of the Four Heavenly King.”

[Nyaa nyaa nyaa nyaa nyaa nyaa!]

‘I went out of my way to worry about you, yet you give me such a cold reply!’

The enraged Roa slapped Artpe’s hand with her tail, then she headed towards the corpse of the Four Heavenly King Jarjet.

However, Artpe was focused on the magic tome. He didn’t even realize that Roa had left him. His eyes were quickly reading the magic tome. If he wanted to increase the performance of the magic being created by the magic tome, he had to be mindful of his memorization of the spell. He also had to worry about his role in chanting the spell. It would allow him control the magic circle with ease.

“M... Mr. Silpennon.”



“Why are you calling my name?... all right. I’ll be there.”

Aria was desperately maintaining her Assimilation ability, yet she couldn’t hide the apprehension she was feeling. Silpennon had just escaped the ‘growing pains’ of his relationship with Aria. He couldn’t win against Aria’s gaze, so he cleared his throat as he approached her. When Maetel saw this, she let out a light laughter. Vadinet looked worried.

“She already has someone she loves... Oh no. What should I do? If I don’t inform that girl...”

While Vadinet was struggling with a baseless worry, the Mana of the magic circle rose. As if it was trying to match the magic circle, the magic tome started letting out a stronger light.

“Aria, are you able to widen the domain of your Assimilation ability?”

“M... my mind and body is at its limit just restraining a portion of the magic circle...”

“You don’t have to worry about that anymore. Just tell me if it is possible or not.”

“I... it is possible.”

When Artpe heard those words, he immediately grinned. He increased the output of the magic tome, and he shouted out loud.

“You should imagine yourself sucking in all the Mana of magic circle as you use your Assimilation! You should no longer pay any attention to the Demonic energy within the magic circle!”

“.....I’ll believe in you!”

She had been chosen as a holy priestess only moment ago. She acted like a holy priestess. Aria nodded towards Artpe. She spoke with conviction. Until now, Aria had restricted her Assimilation ability. She maxed out her Assimilation ability.

Her ability to control her Innate ability was on par with Maetel and Artpe! In a flash, her Assimilation ability expanded past the magic circle and the Zero Class. Her Mana assimilated with the magic circles equipped all over Lihazeta.

The Mana, which had run amok under the machination of Jariet, and the Record of the magic circle rushed into her!

“Kyahhhhhhhhk!”

“Hey! Artpehhhhhhhhh!”

“Now! Lastly...! Materialization!”

Demonic energy and all kinds of energy overwhelmed the holy priestess. She was in danger of losing her status as a holy priestess. However, an explosive light shot out from the magic tome, which was being held up by Artpe’s hand. It paralyzed everything nearby. The Mana of the magic circle took on a specific characteristic thanks to the Materialization spell. The Mana formed another small magic circle in the air!

“Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhh!”

“Aria! Hey! My hand! My hand hurts! Hey!”

It was done.

“Hoo-oo.....”

From within the blinding explosion of light, Artpe let out a small sigh as he closed the magic tome.

It had lasted a brief moment, but he had use all of his power in manifesting the spell. Of course, he was tired.

“It is done.”

“Huh?”

The one to be surprised the most was none other than Maetel.

“It is already done, Artpe? I thought you were going to struggle with it for a very long time!”

“It is tiresome, but the Demon King’s army always uses the same pattern. It’s about

time that I'm able to easily dispose of their antics."

When the light dispersed, the sight of Aria bound in the middle of the magic circle was seen. No, the magic circle no longer existed. It was just Aria. It was hard to put a finger on it, but she was letting out a somewhat noble aura.

"Ah. The probability of us using the magic circle to our advantage was lower than the probability of the Demon King's army using it to their advantage in the future. That is why I got rid of it"

"You got rid of it... It was a magic that contained several hundred years worth of history and Record. You got rid of it so easily!?"

"Yes. I split it half-and-half between the magic tome and Aria."

"Half-and-half!?"

The magic circle wasn't some boiled daikon that could be split easily into halves! It made no sense!

Artpe left behind the shocked Vadinet. He headed towards Aria. She remained sitting in what used to be the center of the absent magic circle.

"Aria."

"Artpe-nim..."

She had used her Innate ability in excess, so she didn't have the strength to move even a single finger. She was leaning against Silpennon, and she was gasping.

"You leveled up too much all at once, so that is why you are having a difficult time. Still, it won't have any negative effects on your body, so you can breathe easy."

"Thank you very much... for helping me..."

This was obvious, but there wasn't a single trace of Demonic energy within Aria's body. Jeriet's intention had been to use her as a sacrifice to summon magical beasts. However, at some point, the possibility of her descending into becoming a Demon had become a real possibility. Artpe had used his magic tome to reverse the Demonic energy. Lastly, he used his Materialization spell to push all of the reversed energy into

Aria.

[Aria Kuar Serieta]

[Level : 231]

[Holy Priestess]

The result of his actions was a ridiculous amount of level ups.

“Hoo, hoo-oo...”

“She leveled up too much? Artpe, what do you mean?”

“What do you think I mean? Aria became higher in level than you.”

“What are you saying!?”

“I just explained it to you, you dork!”

In growth, the most important requirements needed was Mana and Record. Most people achieved this growth when they harmed other beings or when they accomplished an Achievement.

Aria had been in a very special situation. She had received an overwhelming amount of Mana and Record from the magic circle, so it had been possible for her to achieve such explosive growth.

The level of Artpe and Maetel was so high that Aria’s level looked low in comparison. However, she was much higher in level compared to the thief Silpennon. Silpennon had followed Artpe’s recipe for past two years, and he was considered to be a genius thief. Now Aria was clearly above him.

“Artpe, did you intend on growing this girl from the beginning.....?”

“No. However, instead of wasting the Mana, I thought it would be best to help develop

a rising prospect. Since she was already assimilating the magic circle using her Assimilation ability, I thought it was the perfect opportunity.”

“.....”

Maetel was baffled. She was at a loss for words.

If Maetel knew what the magic circle had been used in their past lives, she would have understood why he had done this!

“Silpennon. Aria should be very tired. You should take her, so she can rest. The city is probably in a mess. We have to go patch up the situation.”

“Why do I have to do that? What I meant to say is... Aria is the second holy priestess. She’ll be traveling with you guys, so it would be best if she appears next to you in front of the people.”

When Silpennon said those words, Aria unconsciously clamped down on Silpennon’s forearm. When Artpe saw this, he grinned.

“Aria is in your party. Our party already has Vadinet.”

“However, the duty of the holy priestess is to support the hero... Ah, it hurts!”

“Heeng.”

Artpe understood Aria’s heart. Silpennon was being dense, and Aria looked like she was about to cry. At that moment, Vadinet interrupted them. She was very flustered.

“I... I’m sorry, Artpe-nim. I know I am not qualified to intertere with Artpe-nim’s judgement and actions, but... She is a holy priestess, and she cannot do what you propose.”

“Huh?”

“The holy priestess exists to support the hero. Moreover, the holy priestess is inextricably tied to the hero! If Aria hadn’t become a holy priestess, it wouldn’t have been a problem. However, she is a holy priestess that possesses the golden eyes. If she chooses someone else other than the hero...”

“Ah..... So that is what you wanted to say. Mmm. How should I say this... All right.”

After hearing Vadinet’s words, Artpe thought for a very brief amount of time. In the end, he nodded his head after he came to a decision.

“Vadinet, you are under a huge delusion.”

Everything that was said by Vadinet was a fantasy. Her delusions didn’t make any sense, and he decided to break those delusions with his mouth.

“.....what?”

“It doesn’t matter if it is the holy priestess or the hero. It is just a Class one possesses. There is no rights and duties attached to it.”

“What.....?”

“Let me put it another way.”

Artpe put on a smile as he spoke.

“I’m talking about the rule that says the holy priestess must be in the same party as the hero. I’m also talking about the rule that says a holy priestess cannot mate with another man other than the hero... These are all delusions that were made up in the past.”

“.....what?”

Vadinet was struck dumb. Aria couldn’t hide the relief she was feeling. Silpennon still had no idea what was going on.

It seemed Maetel was the only one that had the complete understanding of the situation. She could only snicker. At such moments, he felt a disparity between this Maetel and the normal Maetel.

“S... so... I’m allowed to love someone other than hero-nim?”

“Of course. It’s the truth. If you see Aria right now...”

“Ooh-ahhhhhhhhhh!”

Artpe had been about reveal Aria's pure heart in such an unceremonious manner. Aria yelled loudly to shut him up. She had been unable to move even a finger a moment ago. It seemed she had recovered a good deal of her energy.

Artpe smirked as he confirmed the truth with Vadinet.

"It doesn't matter if the holy priestess kisses, sleeps or bears the child of another man. The gods won't punish the holy priestess. Holy priestesses are already burdened with many responsibilities, so why would the gods try to control the emotions of a holy priestess? If such a god existed, he would be a Demonic god instead of a god."

"My god..... That means I've been under a ridiculous delusion..."

"Correct."

Vadinet lowered her head. It meant that she had accepted Artpe's words as the truth. Of course, if she had been told this earlier, Artpe's words wouldn't have been as effective.

However, there truly were two heroes, and now a second priestess had made an appearance. She had witnessed the weakest amongst the Four Heavenly King take on the visage of the pope, and he had been easily killed by Artpe's party. Everything that had occurred had torn down what she had considered to be common sense. This was why a crack had formed in her firm sense of self.

On top of that, she had absolute trust in Artpe, and he had pretty much taken a hammer to that cracked sense of self. It would have been strange if it hadn't crumbled!

"I see..."

In the next moment, Vadinet raised her head. Her expression didn't look dark. Instead, it felt as if her face was shining.

"Until now, I thought I had loved Artpe-nim, because I was the holy priestess."

"....."

"Artpe, may I kill that woman?"

"You may not."

“However, it wasn’t like that at all.”

Huh?

Her intro was ominous, so he was thinking about stopping her right there. Unfortunately, Vadinet’s words were faster than his.

“I’ve fallen for you! Not as a holy priestess! I’m just simply in love with you!”

“Ah.....”

“Hooo.....”

“Wowzer.....”

“Ah ah. Somehow, I feel much better! That’s right. Is this why people call this fate...?!”

Her eyes started letting out a brilliant golden light. It was powerful enough to be on par with the newly named holy priestess!

Artpe had been worried things would somehow turn out like this, so he froze in place. He was like a statue. Maetel unsheathed her bastard sword. Aria had become extremely embarrassed even though the other holy priestess had expressed her love in no uncertain terms.

“You son of a bitch! Why don’t you just take every woman of this world for yourself!”

Silpennon was still very dense, and he didn’t have any common sense. Artpe didn’t know why Silpennon had to bring up this topic right now. Silpennon just continued to curse him.



# Chapter 124

## Double Crisis (5)

It was found out that the weakest amongst the Four Heavenly Kings had worn the mask of the pope. The Four Heavenly King was killed the very night he was found out. He was killed by the heroes and the holy priestess.

No one in Lihazeta could sleep that night

From out of nowhere, the pope had acted like a villain, and he had taken a maid as a hostage. The pope had faced off against the heroes, and the people definitely saw the pope transform into a Demon. It was such a bizarre scene that a play might have been more believable than this. It felt as if they were having an out of the body experience.

As they were following the story occurring within the footage, they could hear and see the commotion that was occurring within the Zero Class. They saw light and Demonic energy emanate from the Zero class, so they knew all of this wasn't a hoax.

It was truly fortunate that the sight of Aria becoming the 2nd holy priestess hadn't been revealed through the footage. If that truth had been revealed, Artpe would have been able to work with it. However, he preferred not to have that truth be common knowledge.

[It really is rude to call someone this early in the morning. It is quite rude. If it wasn't Artpe-nim, I wouldn't have answered...]

"It is still night over here, so let's consider it to be even. I want you to contact your merchant association. I've attached images that is newsworthy. I want you to spread it across the continent."

[What is it?]

"We easily defeated the Four Heavenly king, who had been masquerading as the pope."

[.....]

“It’s big news, right?”

[.....you are killing me. I’ll send an executive. Please give us exclusive rights to the story!]

From the moment he entered Paladia, he had planned on overturning the temple. This was why Artpe’s subsequent actions were truly swift.

However, the most urgent task right now was to settle down the people of Lihazeta by telling them the truth. Then they had to settle down Paladia. Lastly, he had to inform the people of this continent that a Demon had infiltrated the inner temple. The news of the hero’s appearance had been spread not too long ago, and the people of the continent were still in a state of bewilderment. This news would properly arouse their attention to the presence of the Demons.

The dam that had been surrounding the Zero Class had been brought down. The rotten water, which had accumulated within, would be revealed to the world. There was clear evidence that showed the corruption that had festered within the temple. It would show the presence of the Demon King’s army on this continent. This proof would be shown to all humans residing in Lihazeta, Paladia and the whole continent.

Artpe contacted Leseti and Deyus. He dumped the responsibility of settling down Lihazeta to them. Then he asked Mycenae to spread the news to the whole continent.

Afterwards, he took Maetel and Vadinet to the Zero Class. They were going to take care of the priests that were gathering within the Zero Class.

“M... my god. The pope really fell to the Four Heavenly King...”

“Aria! My daughter! Hero-nim, is my daughter safe!?”

“Look at these logs! My god! I never expected this to happen within the Zero Class...”

“Ah. That guy is rotten.”

“Ok. Here is your punishment.”

“Ggoo-ahk!”

The pope, who had been their biggest enemy, was gone now. This was why Artpe didn’t

have to hesitate any more. Artpe and Vadinet met out punishment to everyone that was related to the 'rotten water' within the Zero Class. Only the innocent were left alive.

The hero and the holy priestess had carried out an execution of blood and iron!

The priests shuddered when they saw the hill made out of the corpses of the corrupted priests.

"You are truly cool-head and bold. It seems Artpe-nim had covered up his true nature in order to fix what is wrong within the temple!"

"His judgement and patience... He lacks nothing."

"This generation's hero is the strongest we've ever had. He killed a Four Heavenly King before he crossed over to the Demon realm.!"

In truth, the hero from his previous life had accomplished this too. At the time, there had been one incident that had gone against the Demon King's recipe. Instead of the weakest amongst the Four Heavenly King dying, the 3rd strongest Four Heavenly had died first.

At that time, the variable was the holy priestess. She had mastery over the magic circle, and she had been aware of what was going on within the temple...

The past hero's mistake was her inability to control the holy priestess. This was why she had lost the holy priestess after killing the Four Heavenly King.

'However, I was successful in correcting that mistake. I killed the Four Heavenly King as planned, and Vadinet is... Things hadn't turned out as planned, but I was successful in acquiring her as a firm ally. If I can point to one problem...'

It was the fact that a second holy priestess had been born in Aria. When Artpe thought about this, his head hurt. It was unbearable.

In truth, he had this suspicion in the past. He had met the Demon Teana, who hadn't been under the effects of the Demon King's Innate ability called Absolute Control. He also felt something was out of whack when Etna mentioned that there were two more Four Heavenly Kings above her.

He became sure of it when the 2nd holy priestess came into being.

There probably was two Demon Kings in the Demonic realm.

“Ggoo-ahng-ahhk-ahng-ahk.”

He experienced it for 200 years in his past life. Fate was like that. He was sure fate was capable of twisting history in such a manner! He had planned on quickly killing the Demon King, so he could pursue a business in the dairy industry. He despaired when he realized that he had to climb two hills.

“What’s wrong, hero-nim?”

“Hoo. It’s nothing... What about the people? Is everyone gathered here?”

“I believe all the priests within Lihazeta is gathered here.”

When Artpe destroyed the entire Zero Class, an open space had been created. Priests filled this open space. Artpe nodded his head as he looked at them.

In one corner, he saw Deyus and Leseti. They were using the Image Transmission Artifact to record the scene. In another corner, an executive dispatched by the Anywhere company was holding up the same Artifact.

It took an enormous amount of money and magical energy to set up the Image Transmission system across continents, but the current issue was too big to ignore. This was why everyone involved had taken the hit of the cost in implementing the system.

“First, I want everyone to focus your attention here.”

Artpe took out the corpse of the Four Heavenly King Jeriet from his Dimensional Pouch. His transformation ability was no longer being maintained, so the corpse stank of Demonic energy. However, he was still wearing the Artifacts given to the pope. The sight was truly ironic.

[Nyaa.]

“No. At the very least, we still need to preserve the evidence that the Four Heavenly King was here.”

[Nyaa-ahhhhhh.]

Roa saw the leftover Demonic energy within the corpse, so she was smacking her lips. However, she firmly pressed down on her desire. When Vadinet saw this, she realized something for the first time.

“I see. She isn’t a normal cat. She is a cat that consumes all Demonic energy... She really is the ideal pet for a hero. I can think of no other being that is suited for that role.”

[Nyaa nyaa-ah.]

“What did she just say?”

“She said you are pretty.”

“.....hoo-hooht. Thank you.”

In truth, Roa’s words were more nuanced than that.

She said, ‘You smell really rotten, yet you aren’t related to the Demonic energy? Fascinating.’ However, Artpe didn’t tell her what Roa had said for Vadinet’s sake. She was finally a holy priestess that was filled with love. He didn’t want to watch her turn dark again.

He turned to look at the priests, who were focused on the corpse of the Four Heavenly King.

“You guys saw all of it, right? I’m sure you saw the images that was illuminated above the city at night. I won’t question you all as to whether you believe all of this is true or not. The proof is all here. Moreover, I’m trying to spread this truth to Lihazeta and the whole continent.”

Artpe picked up the corpse of the Four Heavenly King. The evil looking corpse was wearing the holy garments of the pope. This sight was clearly recorded by the Image Transmission Artifact.

“The temple’s Zero Class was formed to help the hero defeat the Demon King’s army, yet a Four Heavenly King turned priests into followers of the Demonic god. He did this under the guise of the pope. Those that were supposed to bless the hero tried to kill the hero instead. I received help from the holy priestess Vadinet and my comrades to

unearth this conspiracy..."

Of course, he was spouting bullshit.

"We killed the Four Heavenly King, who had been trying to summon a magical beast in order to kill us. In this process, the magic circle within the Zero Class and the entirety of Lihazeta was incapacitated. It is truly unfortunate since we lost a strong card that would have allowed us to stand against the Demon King's army. However, it is also true that uncontrollable power is more dangerous than an unknown enemy. Several hundred years of history was lost, but as a result, we were able to catch one of the Four Heavenly Kings. From this point on, I'll continue to catch and kill those that are rotten within the temple. I will put us back onto the right path."

"Wahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

"Hero-nim! Please look this way!"

It seemed Artpe was suited to become a religious leader instead of a hero! He gave an eloquent speech! He nodded in satisfaction when he saw the priests go wild.

"Good. This is quite easy since they are all idiots."

"Artpe, you should try to hide inner thoughts."

He hadn't stepped forward, because he just wanted to inform the priests of the truth. That was only part of the reason why he did so. He wanted the presence of the heroes engraved into the minds of the people all over this continent. He wanted to show them concrete proof that they had killed one of the Four Heavenly King. No country would be able to treat them lightly any more.

.....lastly, he wanted to lay down the gauntlet to the Demons that were hiding all over this continent. He would bring the fight to them.

"Artpe-nim is giving a speech in front of all these people. His eyes are shining, and his powerful voice... Hoo-oohk hoo-oohk."

"Ooh. I really want to kill her."

[Nyaa-ah-ah nyaa-ah.]

Afterwards, Artpe took out all the information gathered by Silpennon and Aria. He revealed all the corruption that had occurred within the temple. During this process, Artpe did something he had done within Aedia. There were worshippers of the Demonic god that were trying to hide amongst the priests. They were doing a poor job of it. Of course, he was decisive as he decapitated all of them.

“The hero knows everything.”

“The hero-nim knows everything!”

This was how the mess in Lihazeta was clearly resolved. Paldia became busy as they tried to choose the new pope. Since the Zero Class was destroyed by Artpe, it was decided that they would build a new temple and housing on top of the ruins. This time all priests would have access to this location.

Now there was only one thing left that Artpe had to take care within the temple.

After he turned back everyone, he settled into his newly acquired lodging. Then he brought in Lihazeta’s archbishop. He had been anxiously searching for his daughter. Artpe called him into his room.

“Hero-nim, is my daughter safe?”

“If you are talking about Aria Kuar Serieta, she is safe.”

“Ohhhhhhhhhh!”

He let out a bitter laughter when he saw the archbishop let out tears of relief. He continued to speak.

“However, she will no longer be able to work as a maid. Of course, it will also be difficult for her to work as a priestess in the main temple of Lihazeta. I’ve decided to accept her into my party.”

“Oh my. What an absolute honor... However, my child is still very weak.”

“However, she is special. You probably knew about this, right?”

At his words, the archbishop meekly nodded his head.

“She truly is special. However, it isn’t as if her level can be raised in an instant...”

“That’ll be take all taken care of by us. I want the knowledge of Aria being in our party to be a secret. Moreover... You cannot tell anyone about her Class.”

“Aria’s Class.....?”

Artpe didn’t say anything as he pushed a Soul Contract towards the archbishop. It was fresh off the press from the Anywhere company. He received it early in the morning. On another note, he had received a signature from Vadinet. He received her promise that she wouldn’t do as she pleased from now on. It was an attempt to stop her from going bad. For some reason, Vadinet became hot and bothered when she signed the contract. He didn’t want to think too deeply on that.

“You should sign this first.”

“.....understood.”

When the archbishop finished placing his signature on the contract, Artpe flicked his finger.

From the beginning, Aria had been waiting inside the room. Aria meekly revealed herself.

“.....Aria?”

“Father.”

“You.....”

“Eh-heh-heh.”

Aria let out a sheepish laughter. Afterwards, a halo appeared behind her. The archbishop was at a loss for words. Of course, he knew which Class had been acquired by her daughter.

After all the disturbance was put to rest, the hero’s party left Lihazeta without any regret.





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